

Houck, Samuel M.

To receive the morning star

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TO RECEIVE
THE
MORNING STAR



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TO RECEIVE THE MORNING STAR

THYATIRA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1752-1976

Samuel M. Houck, Th.M.

The Douglas Printing Company, Jacksonville, Florida

1976



THYATIRA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

To
The Glory of God
Who Is
The God of the Living
On Earth
And In Heaven

"TO RECEIVE THE MORNING STAR"

CORRECTED ERRORS:

PAGE 38 - PARAGRAPH 4, LINE 7

J. M. CORNELL SHOULD BE J. M. CORRELL

PAGE 41 - PARAGRAPH 2, LINES 5, 6, & 7

REV. JOSIAH McCORKLE AND THE REV. ABNER W. McCORKLE SHOULD READ THE REV. JOSIAH KILPATRICK AND THE REV. ABNER W. KILPATRICK. THEY WERE NOT SONS OF DR. McCORKLE.

PAGE 44 - PARAGRAPH 2, LINE 5

THE REV. J. W. GOODMAN WAS BURIED IN THYATIRA CEMETERY, BUT LATER MOVED TO A CEMETERY IN RED SPRINGS, N. C.

PAGE 61 - PARAGRAPH 2, LINE 3

D. H. HARRISON SHOULD BE E. H. HARRISON

PAGE 69 - LINE 20, SECOND ROW

T. S. HARRISON SHOULD BE J. S. HARRISON

PAGE 70 - Row 1, LINE 20

STEELET, ROBERT HALL SHOULD BE STEELE, ROBERT HALL

PAGE 71 - LINE 22

T. O. HARRISON SHOULD BE J. O. HARRISON

PAGE 71 - LINE 29

G. LEE GOODNIGHT SHOULD BE J. LEE GOODNIGHT.

PAGE 88 - Row 3, LINE 3

ADD ON AFTER SAMUEL M. HOUCK THE NAMES MISS ELIZABETH CORRIHER, R.N. AND MISS ELLA GRAHAM.

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FOREWORD

Memory is a good gift of God to humanity. The Bible often counsels the reader “remember” — remember in order for something to happen. Memory has to do with history, and history with remembering.

Our remembering may be merely recall, of course. My mother used to date events by something that had happened to one of her children or to other members of her family. Those recollections were shared and so became a part of the lore of our lives. But nothing was expected to happen to us by such rememberings. We were able to relate an event that was done in the past, maybe to chuckle over it, or cry. Then it could be stored in our memory bank until recalled.

To remember in the Bible is a larger word than that. It is to recall in order that you may relive the event which led to some deliverance. Thus, in remembering, the people were to experience for themselves what it was that God did—and does—in the life of His people.

It is in this Biblical sense that I have attempted this History of Thyatira. I remember many people, faces and experiences which became a part of who I am. But of far greater importance, we remember together what God has been doing through and in this congregation because the influence of those people and the inspiration of their lives still lives among us.

I have been encouraged by many in this labor. The Reverend George Calhoun and the Session of the church have been my partners in this endeavor. A special word of thanks goes to Locke and Pauline McCorkle Neel for many contributions of time and energies. The pictures included, together with appendices, are from them. To the Thyatira Memorial Association which agreed to underwrite the cost of publication, I gladly offer gratitude and consign all monies from the book's sale.

Many resources have been used in writing this History. Ear-

lier histories written by Dr. T. W. Lingle in 1924 and Dr. Walter L. Lingle in 1948 have been primary sources, as have been some books written since which gave light to the past. A bicentennial copy of the *Salisbury Post*, published in 1975, also furnished some ideas. The Director and Staff of the Historical Foundation in Montreat gave of time and interest to make available to me materials stored there. Files and other materials in the Public Library in Salisbury were made available to me by the staff there, and were very useful. I owe a special debt of thanks to the librarian at the Perkins Library, Duke University, who furnished the microfilm of six sermons by Dr. McCorkle and additional materials. To all these sources of information and help, I am indebted. Any mistake in names or dates must rest with me, not with them.

I am also grateful to the workers at Drummond Press who have been most helpful in setting up type and explaining technicalities.

Finally, without the ability of my wife to make sense of my poor handwriting and to type several drafts of this manuscript, this work could never have been done. I am grateful to her for that work of love and to our daughters for reading the final draft and making helpful suggestions.

Now I send this History out as an act of appreciation for the opportunities afforded me in childhood, youth and maturing years to be a part of the pilgrimage of faith with the people of God both in Thyatira Church and with all the Saints in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Jacksonville, Florida
May 1, 1976

Chapter 1

TRAVELERS ON THE ROAD

From Philadelphia, Pennsylvania or Baltimore, Maryland to Charlestown (later Charleston), South Carolina is a distance of some six hundred and fifty miles. By 1750 there were well traveled roads which ran between these three centers of population and trade. These roads are important to our story, for they provided the means by which a few families prior to 1745, and many afterwards, came to settle in the land between the Yadkin and the Catawba rivers in upper Piedmont, North Carolina.

Why Philadelphia, Baltimore and Charlestown? Because these were three seaports to which many trading ships came to discharge their cargoes of goods, immigrant families and indentured persons.

The families which came to Charlestown were from England, from Scotland and (a few) from France. They came to settle on lands claimed by the English King and they expected to build in the Carolina Territory a future for themselves. These settlers were by religion Scotch Irish Presbyterians, French Huguenots, and members of the Church of England. Many of those who entered the new world at Charlestown did not remain there, but followed the course of the Pee Dee and Santee rivers into the Cherokee country in upper South Carolina. They established their homes, trading centers and places of worship which, from the earliest days, were extensions of the patterns of life and worship they had known. Many of these settlers in upper South Carolina settled in the area adjacent to Rowan and Mecklenburg counties in North Carolina. There was a bond of brotherhood among them with those of like faith whose story is our concern.

Of those who debarked in Philadelphia, many made their way

westward to settle in Lancaster County in Penn's Colony where there was already both a large number of persons from the English-speaking Old World, but also many from Germany and the low countries as well. In Pennsylvania they fulfilled the time of their indenture, or settled among families they had known before their immigration, while deciding whether to remain in this settled area, or to remove to other places in which to seek their fortunes and serve their God. Many of the persons who begin our story came into the New World through Philadelphia, but not all.

There was a third source of settlers who came early to North Carolina. These were persons who had come to the Maryland Colony seeking land and opportunity, but who began to feel that Maryland was too heavily populated and who, upon hearing descriptions of "the goodly land" to be had in the Granville Tract in North Carolina, decided to make the journey southward seeking that better future of which they dreamed. These also traveled the road through Virginia, across the Blue Ridge Mountains in company with other migrating families.

From Pennsylvania, Maryland and South Carolina, those who begin our story sought the unsettled wilderness, where they could secure land, build a future and practice the virtues of thrift, piety and freedom. They came south from Pennsylvania or Maryland by the Wagon Road which followed the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia for a distance, then crossed the mountain to Amelia Court House, then turned south again. The distance along this way was about four hundred miles. Some followed the Upper Pennsylvania Road which followed the Shenandoah Valley further southward, then crossed the Blue Ridge to Salem in North Carolina. There, or nearby, they could follow the main trading route further south, or follow lesser trails to the upper and middle reaches of the Yadkin and Catawba rivers in Piedmont North Carolina. There they settled, and there our story begins.¹

Who lived in the area between the Yadkin and Catawba rivers at this time? Some Indians, but the tribes living there appear to have been small and peaceable. Three tribes are identified as being in the area, the Sauna, the Tomahitan and the Sapona.² These Indians seem to have been nomadic tribes who fished the rivers and hunted in the forested areas between. There were no

permanent tribal settlements of any importance. Farther west, the Cherokee were living in greater numbers and when aroused to anger, as they often were, created great peril to the settlers.*

By 1745 the area was inhabited by perhaps as many as one hundred families of European descent, religion and culture. Some of these were of German extraction and settled in an area of Rowan County lying south and east of Salisbury. They were of the Lutheran or the German Reformed persuasion. They were well-educated, and brought a rich cultural heritage to the settlement.³

Most of those who had settled however, were Scotch-Irish, Scots men and women whose ancestors had settled in North Ireland in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to work farms for the King of England, who owned the lands. But strife with their royal Landlord and harsh laws that ruined their two leading industries—cattle raising and the manufacturing of woolen cloth—had persuaded many to abandon Ireland for the promises of the American colonies. In Ireland and later in America, the Sons of Scotland maintained their Presbyterian theology and cultivated their love of liberty. They were steeped in the work ethic of Calvinism, devoted to the proposition that God intended humanity to be “fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

The heads of families learned the Westminster Catechism, studied the Bible, and yearned for liberty. They had great confidence in themselves and faith in God who was both Protector and Savior. These responsible leaders taught their children also and sought to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

Between the Yadkin and the Catawba were three settlements of Scotch Irish. These are described by Ramsay⁴ as the Bryan Settlement on the Yadkin in what is now Forsyth County (1747-48), the Davidson Creek Settlement (1748-51), and the Irish Settlement on Grant's Creek and westward to Fifth Creek (1747-

* Fort Dobbs, erected near the present city of Statesville, was built for protection from these Indians.

49). The Bryan Settlement was not related to any congregation. The Davidson Creek Settlement established what became the Centre Church, while the Irish Settlement met for religious services at "the Lower Meeting House" (was the "Upper Meeting House" at the Bryan Creek Settlement?), later called Cathey's Meeting House and finally—from 1764 until the present—Thyatira Presbyterian Church.

What, besides Indians, did the first settlers find? First, they found food. The forests provided homes for geese, buffalo, elk, deer, bear and wild turkey to name only a few of its resources. In addition, hickory, mulberry and persimmon trees produced edible nuts and fruits while oaks provided acorns, a prime source of food for swine.

They found land. Not all the land was forest. "The region extending in a giant, gentle curve from the Delaware Valley and the 'head of Chesapeake' to west-central Carolina was actually a continuous, undulating, well watered plain of savannah grass, differing in no important way at its northern and southern extremities".⁵ Thus, near the water courses was found rich soil ready to be cultivated.

In addition to food already on the land and cultivatable land ready to be planted, the settlers found forests rich in timber. One traveler, a soldier making survey, attests that the trees were so tall that wild turkeys in the top branches were beyond the reach of his musket. The Indians had named the river the "Yadkin" which means "Big Tree", and Colonel William Byrd of Virginia indicated that he had never seen such forests as were found in the area.

They found a territory only loosely governed by British Parliament.* Some years prior a large part of the Carolinas had become property of the king, but Lord Granville had retained his portion of the original grant which encompassed Anson County, from which Rowan was separated in 1753. The fact that the government was far away and somewhat indifferent to their

* Governor Dobbs lived at Edenton, well over three hundred miles eastward, and for several years made little effort to claim even taxes. He was rather willing, for a while at least, to let these settlers alone.

existence and welfare was no hardship for these early settlers. They rather liked it that way. Governor Dobbs knew of their existence and made at least one visit to the area. He viewed some thirty or forty German and Scotch-Irish families and noted that "Except two, there was not less than five to six children in each family, each going barefooted in their shifts in the warm weather and no woman wearing more than a shift and one thin petticoat; they are a colony from Ireland moved from Pennsylvania, of what we call Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who, with others in the neighboring tracts, had settled together in order to have a teacher of their own opinion and choice." He mentions the fact that trade is carried on at Charles Town: "having a wagon road to it, though two hundred miles distant, because our roads are not yet shortened, and properly laid out, and from the many merchants there they afford them English goods cheaper than at present in this province, the trade being in a few hands they take a much higher price. . . ."*

The absence of a Governor did not bother the settlers. For them God alone was sovereign, and therefore the least human authority necessary for order was the best. They could and did decide many matters for themselves. Long before 1775 they had organized a Committee of Safety to give some guidance to the governance of the settlement.

They found unbounded opportunity to work, to worship, to learn, to build political institutions which were based upon the articles of their faith, and to follow their star wherever it might lead them. In this land of opportunity they built their homes, provided for their families, worshipped their God and created a society out of which came rivers of life which continue to flow.

By what names were they known? Alexander Cathey, John Brandon, Adam Hall, John Lynn, George Cathey, Francis Locke, Thomas Gillespie, John and James Graham and Alexander McCorkle. Additional family names were Lawrence*, Cowan, Barkley and Young.

One of the main streams of life which flowed from these beginnings was the religious experience which came out of the

*This family name is also spelled Lowrence.

hearts of these families. The "Lower Meeting House" was a symbol of their roots in the past, a source of their unity in the struggles which they faced, and a beacon to point them to God, whose providence they trusted. For 225 years that stream has continued to flow and to make rich the lives of a multitude of persons. It is a story to be retold, even as the experiences of faith are relived.

Chapter 2

THE MEETING HOUSE BECOMES A CHURCH

On January 18, 1753 a group of people large enough to be a congregation received title to property consisting of twelve acres of land from John and Naomi Lynn. The deed reads in part as follows:

“This indenture, made the eighteenth day of January in ye year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and fifty three, between John Lynn and of ye County of Anson¹ and the Province of North Carolina, of the one part, and the congregation belonging to ye Lower Meeting House between ye Yadkin River and the Cutabo Do, adhering to a minister licensed from or by a Presbytery belonging to and the Old Synod of Philadelphia:”²

The deed requires us to note several facts. First, already in 1753 there was an existing congregation of people who had an identity and a place of worship. Though the date of the deed does not allow Thyatira to claim to be the oldest organized congregation of Presbyterians west of the Yadkin River, it does indicate that *prior* to 1753 there was such a congregation and that it had existed long enough—and was stable enough—to receive and to hold property.

Secondly, we note that this group of people were not an organized church. They could not be recognized as a church since the only church recognized in the colonies of Virginia and the two Carolinas was the Church of England. Dissenters could meet and worship, but their places of worship were designated in this period as “Meeting Houses.” Religious liberty would eventually be granted to people to worship according to the dictates of conscience, but that would come later.

Among the records in the Rowan County Court House is one

dated 1770, which affirms the right of the congregation to continue as a "licensed Meeting House." The document reads, "The Presbyterian congregation of Cathey's Settlement by their Elders and others have signified and in open Court certified to the Justices thereof, that they have built a Meeting House in the Settlement aforesaid, called and known by the name of the Presbyterian Frame Meeting House, for the Publick Worship of God according to the disciples of the Church of Scotland.

"Tis therefore ordered by the Court that the said Presbyterian Meeting House be deeded and held a Publick Licensed Meeting House, and that all those who shall hereafter meet therein, shall be entitled to all the Immunities and Privileges granted by the several acts of Parliament in such cases made and provided, and also that the above Certificate and this Order be registered."

The deed also identifies the Meeting House as "adhering to a minister licensed by a presbytery belonging to the old synod of Philadelphia." Dr. Walter Lingle explains: "Another significant statement in the deed is that the congregation of the Lower Meeting House adhered to a minister licensed by a presbytery belonging to the old synod of Philadelphia. Thereby hangs a tale. The first synod was organized in Philadelphia in 1717 and was called the Synod of Philadelphia. It was the only synod until 1741, when there was a split in the synod caused by heated controversy on two points. One concerned the education of young ministers. The old-timers felt that they should be sent back to the universities of Scotland for their education. Others believed that they should be educated right here in America, in Presbyterian schools that were derisively called 'log colleges.'

"The other point of controversy was even more bitter. It was concerning revivals. Between 1735 and 1740 there swept over New England and the middle Colonies a great revival, known as the 'Great Awakening,' under the leadership of such men as Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. These revivals were sometimes accompanied by shouting, swooning, rolling on the ground and other emotionalism. The old-timers would have nothing to do with this 'new enthusiasm,' as they called it. To make matters worse, some of the younger ministers said that the trouble with the old-timers was that they had never been soundly

converted. So the Presbyterian Church was divided into 'Old Side' and 'New Side.'

"In 1741, the New Side brethren pulled out of the Synod of Philadelphia and organized the New Side Synod of New York, leaving the Old Side brethren in the Synod of Philadelphia. Thus there were two distinct Presbyterian denominations for a number of years. Happily these two synods were re-united into one synod in 1758, and its name was the Synod of New York and Philadelphia. It was the only synod for the next thirty years and served as a General Assembly until the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America was organized in 1788-1789. It was during the division into Old Side and New Side that the deed for the Thyatira land was made, and the deed takes the pains to say that their minister adhered to the Old Style Synod of Philadelphia."⁵ It is worth noting also that this congregation existed even though there was no permanent minister. There were Ruling Elders, however, who had probably been ordained either before migrating to the New World or during their stay in Pennsylvania or Maryland and who could lead the congregation in worship, could read sermons from books brought with them, and could catechize the congregation. Hurley and Eagan were quite within the mark when they wrote, "The history of the period impresses emphatically the fact that in these pioneer days of the American colonies the Church was the center not only of the religious life of the community, but the nucleus of social, educational, civic and military activities as well."³

The group of people who organized the "Lower Meeting House" in 1753 changed its name in 1755 to "Cathey's Meeting House." At the time there were many groups meeting for worship, but few organized churches and no settled ministers in the territory of Rowan County. One of the first ministers who is associated with the area is the Reverend John Thompson. Dr. Jethro Rumple wrote, "The Reverend John Thompson came into this region as early as 1751, and settled near Centre Church. He preached at Fourth Creek, and various other stations in Rowan County for about two years, and it is said the people came twenty or twenty-five miles to his appointments . . . He had one preaching station near where Third Creek Church is."⁴

Thompson died in 1753, and today he is generally acknowledged as the Old Side Minister who was serving the Lower Meeting House when its deed was made.

Samuel Young was one of the earliest pioneers in The Lower Meeting House settlement. He was already established in his Third Creek residence at the time that Thompson began his work in the Charge mentioned above. Rowan Court records show that Samuel Young purchased land bordering on the property of Cathey Meeting House, which tract of three hundred acres he bequeathed to his son, Samuel. He had other business and political connections with a number of prominent citizens who were active in the development of the Cathey religious work.

After the probable ministry of Reverend Mr. Thompson the congregation was visited occasionally by other ministers sent from the Synod. Among those named in the records are the Reverend Hugh McAden, who served for possibly a year and then spent the remainder of his ministry in the coastal section of North Carolina. It is most likely that the congregation was primarily served by itinerant missionaries who came to catechize the congregation, preach the Gospel and dispense the sacraments.

It is certain that in 1764 two ministers were sent from the Synod to determine the boundaries of the various congregations. These were The Reverends Elisha Spencer and Alexander McWhorter. Their visit to Cathey Meeting House brought about a change in the name to Thyatira Church, and established the boundaries of the congregation. These boundaries seem to have encompassed a radius of some ten miles, for already a few places of worship had been established in other locations. The Fourth Creek congregation, for instance (now the First Presbyterian Church of Statesville), was organized in 1764, but prior to that time persons living that distance had traveled to Cathey's Meeting House for worship, instruction in the faith and for discussion of mutual concerns. In 1788 the Third Creek Presbyterian Church was organized, which indicates that the migration begun in the 1740's had continued and that the area was settled by families of Presbyterian persuasion.

Whether the visit of Spencer and McWhorter resulted in solving the theological differences between the proponents of "Old Side" and of the "New Side" may only be conjectured. The

matter of the validity of a variety of religious experiences was to return at the turn of the century, as we shall see.

Following the ministrations of these two missionaries there is no record of a minister serving the congregation for a period of eight years, until a Mr. Harris took charge for two years. After his ministry closed it was five years before the congregation secured the leadership of one of its own, Samuel Eusebius McCorkle who served the congregation from 1777 until his death in 1811.

What was the congregation like in 1777? What manner of people were they? It is necessary to look at these questions, for it is certain that a congregation helps to shape a minister and a ministry as surely as a minister shapes the congregation.

The Thyatira congregation in 1777 was composed of men and women for the most part well educated according to the standards of their times. A "Cathey Library" is mentioned in the will of Samuel Young, who was probably an elder at Thyatira before becoming a charter member of the Third Creek congregation. This library seems to have been established for members and families of the congregation.* The founders held ownership and partnership rights, setting up rules governing the circulation and reading of the books. John Barr, among the first elders of Thyatira, noted that he had read Prideaux's *Connections* which was "in our Thyatira Library, of which I had a share."⁵

In addition to the Cathey Library, members of the congregation owned personal books for study. The same Samuel Young mentioned above bequeathed his personal library to his sons, listing 54 titles and a total of 96 volumes including Matthew Henny's six-volume *Commentary on the Scriptures* and some sixteen additional books on Bible and theology.⁶

The congregation was composed of people who were not only educated, but who owned the land they worked. Early deeds now in the Rowan County Court House in Salisbury indicate many

* Remnants of that Library were still in existence as late as 1925, for I remember reading Jethro's *History of Rowan County* and some volumes of missionary biographies from it at that time. It had changed greatly in its contents, but the purpose continued, i.e. to enable the congregation to be informed, thoughtful and responsible Christians.

sales of land tracts as new arrivals came to settle in the well-watered land between the rivers. They built up their holdings in houses, cattle, sheep and slaves as they tilled the bottom lands near the many streams and cleared the forests for other fields.

The congregation had within it lovers of freedom. Early records indicate that some of the first actions taken to set the fires of the war of liberation in 1776-1783 were by the Rowan Committee of Safety and like groups in Mecklenberg. It was from such groups that the Mecklenberg declaration of May 20, 1775 came. Members of the Thyatira congregation were surely active in The Regulators Movement and probably were present at the battle of Alamance Creek which, while not successful, did serve the cause of freedom and give England cause for reflection. When the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence, Thyatira had no less than thirty-two members who served in the Revolutionary War (see Appendix B).

The congregation was scattered. As Spencer and McWhorter had decided, the distance from the Meeting House to the outer bounds of the congregation was at least ten miles, but although their farms were isolated, Thyatira's members found a true exhilaration of life and spirit during the long services at their meeting house which they attended faithfully.

Thyatira was also a congregation in which were leaders in the larger community. Salisbury, then a small crossroads, was some ten miles east of Thyatira, but leaders from the congregation played no small part in the functions of the courts and other public matters. While there it was inevitable that the Presbyterians of the "Irish Settlement" would share concerns and ideas with the Lutherans and German Reformed of the lower county areas and work together to establish those laws and customs for the common welfare. In Salisbury the two cultures met and complemented each other.

Finally, the congregation was settled in its denominational loyalties. Its form of government was according to that laid down in The Book of Church Order, and those elected to serve as Ruling Elders did so with a sense of responsibility to both God their Lord and Savior, and to the welfare of the members of the congregation over which God had made them His under-shepherds.

A list of those serving as elders at Thyatira during the twenty-five years following the visit of Messrs. Spencer and McWhorter includes the father of Samuel McCorkle, Alexander McCorkle, William Cathey from whose family the log meeting house received its name, John McNeeley, James Graham direct from Scotland, John Dobbin, Samuel Young, and Samuel Barkley. There were others, but no written record is preserved.⁷

Such, then, was the congregation which had existed over a period of more than twenty years, faithfully hearing the Gospel and ever praying that the Lord of the Harvest would send a laborer to give pastoral oversight. In 1776 the prayers were answered. God sent one who had grown to manhood in the congregation and so was a product of it, but one who had gathered from other fields and so could minister to it and to the community in which it was.

We do not know the membership of the congregation at that time, for all Session records of the period have been lost. It must have been what, at the time, was a rather large number. Such a congregation required for its minister one who was learned in the Scriptures, and in other branches of learning; who was able to share in the civic life of the community and whose vision was great enough to enable his people to "glorify God and to enjoy Him forever."

Such a leader God raised up for His people in their first full-time pastor, Samuel Eusebius McCorkle.

Chapter 3

PROPHET, PRIEST, EDUCATOR AND PATRIOT

When the Presbytery of Orange installed Samuel Eusebius McCorkle as pastor of Thyatira Church in 1777 it gave its blessing to a relationship that would continue for over thirty years.

The young minister knew the congregation. He had come to the area with his family in 1755 as a boy of nine. Samuel was the eldest child of Alexander McCorkle, who had migrated from Ulster, Ireland before Samuel was born and, with his wife, had settled in Harris Ferry, Pennsylvania. It may have been that Alexander and Agnes Montgomery McCorkle were indentured persons, and worked in Harris Ferry long enough to pay for their passage to America. It was often the case that Scotch-Irish immigrants remained in one place long enough to complete their indenture and to save money for their own land, equipment, livestock, wagon and horses.¹

When Alexander McCorkle moved his wife and six children to Rowan County in 1755, he bought six hundred and forty acres for a sum of thirty-two pounds, "current money of Virginia."² The land had on it "a great deal of forest, but also a house, out-buildings, orchard, garden, pasture and water" according to the deed.³ The following day the McCorkles sold three hundred and thirty-one acres of the tract to Richard King for twenty-nine pounds. The buildings were on the tract sold, so the McCorkles had to work diligently together to clear the ground, build a house and barn and plant their own fields and garden.⁴

The family thrived. Ten children in all were born to the couple, all of whom are mentioned in the will of Alexander McCorkle dated 1800. Pious Presbyterians (and probably well-educated) the parents were concerned that their children be reared

properly. They had named their first born after Samuel, the Biblical prophet and judge, and Eusebius, Father of Church Historians. Possibly they often reminded the growing lad of their hopes for him reflected in his name.

The family quickly associated itself with the congregation of Cathey's Meeting House, and shortly after their arrival, Alexander McCorkle was elected one of the Ruling Elders in the Congregation. He was also a member of the Cathey Meeting House Library group.

Worship at the Meeting House was usually conducted by one of the Elders in the absence of an ordained minister. The service consisted of the singing of Psalms and Hymns, the reading of Scripture, and the reading of a sermon by the Elder. Often services were held both morning and afternoon. The Catechism was taught and it was expected that those in attendance would learn the "fixed principles of life pleasing to God, and would live by them."⁵

Reared in such a home, it is probable that Samuel early in life felt called to the gospel ministry. It is certain that his parents would have encouraged the young man in responding to such a call. They were desirous that their children be educated and gave them opportunity. At the age of four Samuel had been entered in an English School.⁶ By the time he was in his teens Samuel was teaching the younger children, and by his mid-teens he was employed in a public English school.⁷ It is probable that Samuel attended Crowfield Academy, located in the Centre Church area, for a year or two⁸ before he began classical studies with the Reverend David Caldwell in Guilford County.

Caldwell had begun life as a carpenter, but gave up that trade for the ministry and teaching. He was settled in the Buffalo and Alamance Churches by 1765, but was not ordained until 1767. He opened a classical school soon thereafter which became one of the outstanding preparatory schools of the time. He was married to Rachel Craighead, daughter of Alexander Craighead who was pastor in Mecklenberg County and also a noted preacher and educator.

To the school of David Caldwell came many young men for training and preparation to enter the colleges where they would receive further education.

By 1768 Samuel McCorkle had completed his work at Caldwell's school. He had studied Latin and Greek as well as theology, the Bible and literature. He took with him from the school, in addition to his formal learning, the additional wisdom that came from association with the Caldwell family. A saying of the period was that "Dr. Caldwell made the scholars, but Mrs. Caldwell made the preachers." He was accepted in Princeton College in 1768.

For Princeton, 1768 was the beginning of a new era. Dr. John Witherspoon, having been elected President the preceding year, arrived in 1768 to begin his work. Witherspoon was forty-three years of age, a Scotchman trained in theology, science and mathematics. On his arrival it is probable that he knew little or nothing of the grievances of the colonies against the English Government, but he was soon to become a strong voice in the movement for independence. He "conceived of the college as a training ground for the preparation of young men to take their place in the widening sphere of colonial life as Christian gentlemen and scholarly men of affairs."⁹

As teacher, Witherspoon recognized that students should be well versed in every branch of learning. He wrote, "to make what the world calls a learned man or a great scholar, requires a very general knowledge of authors, books, and opinions of all kinds."¹⁰ He impressed upon his students that "the understanding which God has given us, and every object that He hath presented to it, may be improved to His Glory . . . A truly good man does grow both in holiness and usefulness by every new discovery that is made to him. Therefore, learning in general is to be esteemed, acquired and improved."¹¹

He was particularly concerned with the preparation of ministers, as well he may have been. Five of the seven students who entered Princeton in 1768 were studying for the ministry; the other two (including James Madison), for a career in law. Witherspoon felt that extensive knowledge was necessary for the ministry. He noted in his lectures, "there is no branch of literature without its use. If it were possible for a minister to be acquainted with every branch of science, he would be more fit for public usefulness. I observe that the assistant studies to theology are chiefly the following: 1) Languages 2) moral phil-

osophy 3) History, sacred and profane, 4) eloquence, including the belle lettres study in general."¹² All of these studies he concluded "are necessary to keep the sacred truths we are obliged to handle from contempt."¹³

Witherspoon also took a lively interest in current affairs and became a strong supporter of the cause of liberty. He must have passed many hours in discussing with his students the grievances of the colonies and, more to the point, God's gift of freedom. In 1774 he wrote, "The cause in which America is now in arms is the cause of justice, liberty and human nature." Two years later he would sign the Declaration of Independence as one of twelve Presbyterians, and as the only clergyman.

McCorkle graduated from Princeton in 1772 after four years' exposure to Witherspoon and his convictions. That exposure would influence McCorkle's ministry as long as he lived.

For a brief time he taught school, then served as itinerant pastor to several churches in Virginia until in 1775 when he received an invitation to return to Thyatira as pastor. He wrestled over his duty in the matter, having also received a call to Virginia, but he finally decided to accept the call of his home congregation. In January, 1776 he began his ministry to Thyatira, and, after an eighteen-month probationary period, was installed the following year. At thirty, McCorkle was in the full flower of life—a man large of body, attractive in appearance and eloquent in speech. He would remain at Thyatira until his death in 1811.

Not many months after beginning his pastorate, he married Margaret Gillespie, daughter of Robert and Elizabeth Maxwell Gillespie. Robert, the keeper of an inn in Salisbury, had been in the Fort Dobbs blockhouse in February, 1760, when it was attacked by the Cherokee Indians. He may well have been the person scalped and left for dead. He died in March, 1760, and was buried in the Thyatira cemetery. Elizabeth had later married William Steele, who died in 1773. Thereafter, she continued to manage the inn in Salisbury until her death in 1791.

Following their marriage, Samuel and Margaret probably lived either with Mrs. Steele or with the McCorkle family until 1778, when they moved to a farm they called Westfield. There they lived for the remainder of their lives, becoming the parents

of four children and owners of at least four slaves who helped in the fields and in the house. Late in life, Dr. McCorkle was the victim of a stroke that impaired his labors, though his mind remained alert until his death on January 21, 1811. He and his wife are buried in the Thyatira cemetery.

What manner of ministry did "the prophet of Zion Parnassus"¹⁴ fulfill at Thyatira? First of all it was a ministry of preaching the word of God and of pastoral concern for the spiritual life of his congregation. His sermons were rooted and grounded in Biblical revelation. He believed in the authority of the Bible in all matters of faith and conduct. He knew the sinfulness of men, both from history and personal sensitivity. And he also had experienced the work of grace to forgive and accept the sinner. His preaching abounded in references to Scriptures and in quotations from it. His sympathies were broad and deep for he knew the agony of the Savior in His humiliation on the cross. His joy was great, for he knew the victory over sin and death.

Many sermons of Dr. McCorkle remain. They were originally written in full and were probably preached as written. The wide range of his interests is demonstrated by six sermons now in the Perkins Library at Duke University.¹⁵

The first of these is entitled "A Sermon for the Anniversary of American Independence." In this message Dr. McCorkle examined "the design of Heaven in giving existence to nations." That design is to "prevent ignorance, promote knowledge of every kind, especially knowledge of His Wisdom, Power and Goodness in governing nations; to promote knowledge and practice of justice and charity and the principle of civil government; to extend the knowledge of natural philosophy and of commerce and trade, of agriculture and the manufactures, and above all the knowledge and practice of our Most Holy religion." In the sermon the low estate of religion during the war was decried, but it was noted that "the effects of such a sad state of affairs would not be to destroy religion . . . it needs no defense. The effect would be to destroy independence rather than our religion." In this sermon we detect the love and high honor given to knowledge, and the very close relationship between religious faith and governmental duties.

Two sermons are on "The Law of God." He made clear in one

of these that God has given "judicial laws and moral laws." "It is for others," he said, "to explain the judicial law, but it is my office to explain the moral law." He affirmed that the moral law rested on God, who gave it, that both the precepts and prohibitions found in the law were binding. Yet he tempered the severity of the law by saying, "Faith is love trusting in God through Jesus Christ; humility is love lying in the dust. Heavenly mindedness is love raised on high. Zeal is love in a flame. Prayer is the breath of love and all good works are but love clothed with proper actions and rendered visible to the naked eye." The sermon concluded with an examination of rewards and punishments; summing them up by declaring, "the rewards are a measure of the goodness of God; the punishments, of His Everlasting judgements."

The second sermon on "The Law" was developed under these heads: "1) God's mercies to Israel and America; 2) To see what duties he required of them and still demands of us in consequence of these mercies, and 3) To show the certainty of national destruction where these duties are neglected, then make such application as the text and occasion require."

There are two sermons on "Creation." One is based upon the Genesis account and again had three points: "1) A survey of the nature and properties of the body and 2) A survey of the nature and properties of the soul and 3) The nature and attributes of God that may be learned from both."

The second was based on a text in Revelation 4:11. Here Dr. McCorkle divided the text into "1) Thou hast created all things; 2) A time and progress for this creation . . . they are and were created; and 3) An end and object . . . to receive glory and honor and power." This sermon ranged through astronomy, physiology and physics and indicates how well he had taken to heart the teachings of John Witherspoon.

The sixth sermon, entitled "The Crime and Punishment of Plundering," must have been preached during the last year of the War of Independence when the British armies were on the way to Yorktown. He spared neither Whig nor Tory as he exalted the law of God. "Thou shalt not steal," he declared, and admonished with St. Paul, "Let him that stole steal no more." Among the designs of the sermon was "to strike fear into the

hearts of those who have wantonly plundered the possessions of families."

In one sermon he indicated his joy in his work: "No man can be happier in his own mind, in his family, select friends and pastoral charge," he said, then continued, "Nor am I enraged at the political fools who despise religions . . . that religion he despises has taught me to pity him, with meekness and authority to reprove, rebuke and exhort him, but I suffer no man to despise my office."

From these extended quotations it is clear that Dr. McCorkle looked upon religion as related to all facets of life, an attitude widely held in that day. A contemporary of McCorkle's, historian Charles Woodmason, summed up the attitude in this way, "You may think I am out of my proper sphere . . . but sir, if acting for the good of mankind, the right and Liberty of the subject, the relief of the Poor, the Needy and Distressed, the Stranger . . . the Traveler, the Sick and the Orphan . . . if the advancement of Religion . . . good of the Church, Suppression of idleness, beggary, prophaneness, Lewdness and Villiany. If the banishment of Ignorance, Vice and Immorality, promoting Virtue and Industry, Arts and Sciences, Commerce and Manufactures, and every Public Work, be characteristic of a Christian I hope that I have not in drawing up the enclosed deviated from what my Great Master came into the world to establish . . . Glory to God, peace on earth . . . and good will among men . . . Your most humble and obedient servant, Charles Woodmason."¹⁶

Samuel McCorkle shared with his congregation the learning he had acquired and wanted them to know. In his 1925 history of Thyatira, Dr. Thomas W. Lingle observed, "He presented truth abundantly in his discourses on the Sabbath" and "also prevailed upon his people to study the Scriptures at home. In order to do this he had a Bible class, composed of the principal part of his congregation. Commencing with the book of Genesis, he proceeded regularly through the Bible. Such questions were asked as would lead to reading and reflection."¹⁷ McCorkle evaluated the results of these studies and judged, "I have found it profitable to myself and my people, and can venture to say that as far as I have proceeded, there is not a congregation on the continent better acquainted with the Scriptures."¹⁸ By faithful-

ness to his charge as preacher, Dr. McCorkle fulfilled his ministry.

Early in his ministry he encouraged a wider use of the Cathey Library and provided personal books for members to read. Beyond this he also encouraged the congregation to be active citizens in the political affairs of the county, state and nation.

Samuel Eusebius McCorkle was also a stalwart presbyter and led his congregation to share the life of the denomination to which they belonged. He faithfully attended meetings of the Presbytery of Orange while he was a member of it. He was Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of Concord when it was set off from Orange. He served also in the meetings of the Synod.

His interest in the extension of the Church included a concern that the Gospel be preached in the regions of Tennessee which, following the Revolutionary War, was a fast-growing area of the nation. One of his sons would serve as missionary-minister in Tennessee.

During his pastorate there occurred a revival movement which created serious friction, both within the congregation of Thyatira and the Church-at-large. The controversy had been started years before when the Presbyterian Church had been divided into Old Side and New Side. The Old Side objected to the methods of revivalists, while the New Side accepted and promoted them. The split in the Church had officially been closed in 1758, but memories lingered long after official actions were taken. Besides, the rapid growth of Methodist and Baptist congregations gave credence to the revival experience.

Dr. McCorkle was not overly impressed with reports he had heard, but being willing to expose himself to new learning—and aware that God had new light to give—he, along with his Elders, attended a meeting near Mr. Airy in 1803. There he was much impressed by what he saw and experienced, but could not bring himself to accept it fully as from God.

As a result of the revival movement, several of the families at Thyatira felt the need for ministrations in Spiritual matters different from that of their pastor. Accordingly, in 1805 three Ruling Elders, their families and probably other families were dismissed to form the new congregation which still exists as the Back Creek Presbyterian Church, about which we will say more

in Chapter 4. This split probably brought much personal grief to the pastor, but he realized that God was able to lead in more than one way and accepted the division with good grace. Incidentally, this is the only serious division within the congregation in its two hundred and twenty-five years of existence.

Samuel Eusebius McCorkle believed in the importance of education. He began to dream early in his ministry of a school in which he could use his own talents for teaching. This dream reached some fulfillment in the school which he began and called "Zion Parnassus." This was a school designed to teach science, languages, belles lettres, and theology. It was also designed to teach the students who attended to become teachers themselves, and thus was one of the first "Normal" schools established in the new nation.

But, McCorkle felt education was needed not only for a few, but for all citizens in the state. Accordingly, he was among the persons most influential in establishing the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, serving on several committees of the trustees during the preliminary years and continuing as a trustee after the University began to take students.¹⁹

Dr. McCorkle was also a man who translated his faith and knowledge into political concerns, an ardent supporter of the American Revolution. While there is little evidence that he was active as a soldier or chaplain, there is much evidence of his interest in and support of the state militia and of the Cause. When General William Lee Davidson was killed at Cowan's Ford in 1881 he was wearing an overcoat given (or loaned) by McCorkle.²⁰

In this minister, the congregation at Thyatira found one who gave leadership, sympathy and challenge. He also encouraged them to pursue diligently the rewards of honest toil, of education and learning and to be faithful churchmen and churchwomen as well as active citizens of the county, state and nation. It was a ministry that set the course for that congregation to follow even until the present day.

Thyatira has grown in years, but it has continued to be in many ways the "lengthened shadow" of the first of her "sons" called to the ministry of the Word of God.



Thyatira is People



The Elders

Front row, left to right: W. A. Sides, Jr., John J. Parker, Curtis C. Graham, C. Locke Neel, W. Herron Kistler, James A. Sloan, Theodore S. Sloan, James W. Albright.

Back row, left to right: R. Hall Steele, O. Worth Litaker, Ralph E. Smith, Leonard D. Litaker, William S. Hall, Carl W. Hall, Jr., Benjamin I. Harrison.



The Diaconate

Front row, left to right: Ted W. Luther, Harold R. Litaker, T. Correll Hall, Jr., Robert H. Grubbs, Robert E. White, J. Wilson Barber.

Second row, left to right: Thomas F. Turner, John B. Caldwell, Jr., Dewey M. Shaver, Frank O. Deal, Don R. White, Thomas A. Hall.

Back row, left to right: Robert D. Weast, Darrell Z. Goodnight, Sidney R. Albright, Ronald Goodnight, R. Frank Albright, E. K. Graham, Jr., Larry Graham, Howard R. Goodman.



Officers of the Women of the Church

Front row, left to right: Mrs. Donnie White, Mrs. W. A. Sides, Mrs. Everette Goodnight, Mrs. Mattie Lee Graham, Mrs. W. C. Goodnight, Mrs. Dan Ennis.

Back row, left to right: Mrs. Carl Wilson, Mrs. Dewey Shaver, Mrs. Locke Neel, Mrs. Tom Baker, Mrs. Carl Hall, Jr. Mrs. Howard Goodman.



Youth Fellowship

Front row, left to right: Mrs. Darrell Goodnight, Advisor, Sarah Shaver, Donna Shaver, Leigh Ann Luther, Sandra Seaboch, Mrs. C. T. Himes, Advisor.

Second row, left to right: Darrell Goodnight, Advisor, Carolyn Wilson, Sharon Weast, Tim Himes, Patty Wilson, Tony Albright, Merri Jo Harrison.

Back row, left to right: Timothy Seaboch, Mellisa Hall, Boyce Barnette, Eddie Upright, Andy Barnette.



The Choir

Front row, left to right: Mrs. Alice Scheld, Organist, Sarah Shaver, Donna Shaver, Carolyn Wilson, Merri Jo Harrison, Mrs. Dan Ennis, Mrs. Ted Luther.

Second row, left to right: Mrs. Howard Goodman, Sharon Weast, W. A. Sides, Patty Wilson, Harold Litaker.

Back row, left to right: James W. Albright, Mrs. C. T. Himes, Sandra Seaboch, Millicent Kerr, Leigh Ann Luther, Robert Scheld.



Youth Choir

Front row, left to right: Krista Ennis, Stacey Ennis, Kevin Irvin, Mark Harrison, Patricia Baker, Lynn Albright, Ronda Goodnight.

Back row, left to right: Mark Hall, Elizabeth Scheld, Richard Luther, Norman Shaver, Gwen Graham, Sherri Baker, Bennie Harrison.



Homecoming Scene



Homecoming Scene



Fellowship Hall, built 1962





Blessings Outpoured

Chapter 4

DIVISIONS, UNITY AND GROWTH 1810-1890

The revivals that swept over the new nation in the latter decade of the 18th century and early in the 19th brought mixed results. To the Methodist and Baptist denominations these years were times of great growth. To many Presbyterian congregations they were years of tension. We have already noted that Thyatira was not excluded from the effects of these events. This was but the first of several issues that would bring a time of testing to the congregation over the next seventy-five years.

The first test came, as noted in the last chapter, when three Elders of Thyatira—including John Barr, whom Dr. Walter Lingle characterized as one of the most learned and pious men of the congregation—were so affected by the revival movement of the early 1800's that they began a new congregation. This congregation was located some three miles west of Thyatira and received the name Back Creek. From 1805 until 1877 the congregations of Thyatira and of Back Creek went their separate ways. (In that year they agreed to call the same pastor, an arrangement that continued until 1946. Many families attended Thyatira or Back Creek for Sunday School and worship, according to which congregation had the morning service scheduled.)

While the revival movement led to a division of Thyatira, it also left as a very positive legacy an emphasis upon evangelism and a deep commitment of life that would become a hallmark of the congregation.

For many years after the death of Dr. McCorkle the congregation received leadership from pastors who were men of sound scholarship, devoted to Biblical preaching and to ministering to the needs of persons and families in the congregation. They

were Teaching Elders who took seriously their responsibilities to instruct the congregation in the Word of God, to encourage the use of the catechisms as a means of developing Christian faith and moral character in the young, and "to walk with exemplary piety before the flock of which God made them overseer."¹

Such ministers also received from the congregation (so far as records lead us to draw conclusions) strong support. Members heard the preaching with attention, heeded admonitions to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ" and sought to adorn the Gospel by their uprightness and faithfulness.

The Ruling Elders gave strong support to the ministers, particularly in the worship of God through the Sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism.

From Scotland had come the custom of examining believers before communion and giving them Communion tokens to use for admission to the Lord's Supper. Such tokens were used for many years at Thyatira, although when the custom began and ceased is not recorded. Many years after tokens were discontinued, Communion preparatory services continued to be held on Friday night and Saturday morning preceding the celebration of Communion on Sunday, and the Session met after the Saturday worship to receive into the church persons desiring to unite as communing members. But the times brought additional tests. One was the controversy over what children should be admitted to the Sacrament of Baptism.

The Baptism controversy, which raged primarily in New England but which affected the entire Church, concerned the question of whether a child could only receive Baptism when one or both parents were confessing Christians, or if a child could receive baptism if one of the parents had been baptized, but had not been received into church membership.

In New England the issue was decided in favor of baptism of children when the parents had been baptized, even if they had not confessed their own faith. This "half-way covenant"² was accepted by some, rejected by others. Presbyterians had affirmed that at least one parent must be a church member for the child to receive Baptism. The Reverend Thomas Espy, who was the pastor at Centre Church located in the Davidson Creek Set-

tlement (See Chapter 2 above), had refused Baptism to any child whose parents were not confessing Christians. As a result he and the Centre Church were at odds. He resigned that pastorate and came in 1831 as pastor of Thyatira and Salisbury. Evidently he found in these congregations acceptance of his views.

Another such controversy also arose in the Church at large, which came to be known as the New School-Old School controversy. In many places waves of optimism were sweeping over the nation. It was a time of great expansion when a person could become whatever he wished to become. Opportunity was the key word of the era of the 1830-40's. Anybody could become President, and to the minds of many the future was open and promised any dream. But this kind of optimism was counter to such doctrines as Original Sin as well as some aspects of Election. It is not surprising that the Presbyterian Church engaged in serious and sometimes acrimonious debate over the issues. While it does not appear that the initial issues in the New School-Old School controversy seriously affected life at Thyatira, the controversy itself eventually affected the Southern Church as a whole, for it came to focus on the issues of slavery. The New School being against that institution, the Old School rather generally supporting it.

Among the membership of Thyatira were slaves who were the property of some of the church members. The issue of the propriety of owning slaves had never been a matter of much open debate. Dr. McCorkle had owned at least four slaves, and other families in the congregation had more. There is no roll now in existence to give us accurate information on just how many there were. However, there are some intriguing hints on record that the presence of "colored" people was of concern. A minute of the Session of September 13, 1830 reads, "Resolved, that no colored person shall be granted privileges of communion of first application." (Motion presented by Francis Gibson.)³ This note is notable not only for what it says about "coloreds," but also it indicates the importance to the Session of the proper observance of the Lord's Supper.

Two years later, in August of 1832, with Reverend Thomas Espy as moderator, the Session "Resolved that no person of

color be admitted to the Ordinance of Baptism under one year after the first application, but except in a training of examination and instruction from the regular pastor."⁴ Names recorded as Session members are John McCulloch, Clerk, Hall, Brandon, Lowrance, Graham, Wilson and Miller. This resolution reflects the care which the Session gave to the responsibility of preparing adults to live out the vows taken at Baptism by professing Christians. It also raises the question of the privilege of believing parents to present their children for the Sacrament. Did the resolution prevent Christians who were "persons of color" from claiming the covenant promises for their children? The resolution is one more indication that there was in the congregation a very large concern that the sacrament of Baptism be received as a sign and seal of a Covenant between God and His people.

The restrictions placed upon "coloreds" did not keep them from sharing in the life of the congregation. In 1844, 1845, 1846 and 1848 the Session received into the church upon profession of faith "colored" people and listed two of these as being baptized as well. These persons were given pastoral attention by ministers and Session. A minute of May 10, 1850 tells us that "Isaac, a colored man, appeared before the Session and confessed his repentance for the offense for which he was suspended from the church about a year ago. After some conversation with him it was unanimously resolved that he be restored to the communion of the Church." Present for the meeting were Elder Alexander Lowrance, John McCulloch, Thomas Todd and James B. Gibson.⁶

In 1856, the roll of the church contains one hundred eight names of "colored" persons. Some of these are marked with an "X" which may indicate that they had died.

While Thyatira dealt with its own issues in relation to slaves and other "coloreds," tension had been building in the nation. In 1828 the legislature of North Carolina had passed a law "forbidding anyone to teach negro slaves how to read." Since the pastor of Thyatira at the time, Reverend James Stafford (1822-1830), was deeply interested in teaching slaves to read the Bible, he had resigned his pastorate and left the state for sake of his conscience.⁷ It is probable that through the years many families in the congregation neglected the law in order to fulfill their concerns for both education and religion among the people

of the community. That the congregation continued its ministry to slaves and their owners was demonstrated in 1860 in the building of a new edifice for worship, when a gallery for slaves was incorporated into the design.

By the time the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church met in 1861, tensions had become very inflamed. Already South Carolina had seceded from the Union. Before the meeting was over the commissioners from all Presbyteries in the South withdrew and by December of that year, these Presbyteries sent commissioners to Augusta, where they organized the Presbyterian Church in the Confederate States of America. Thyatira would give large support to the Confederate cause, and forty-four members of the Church would serve in that bloody conflict.⁸ Thanksgiving was surely given that of these only one was wounded and none died in battle.

With the end of the war the people returned to homes and fields, and to the Church, to rebuild their lives and to live in Christian love and joy. However, the War Between the States created strains between owners and slaves in the congregation. When the war was over, records give no indication that the congregation continued its openness and missionary zeal toward the now-freed slaves, although there was a willingness for blacks to attend special services, such as the precommunion service and evangelistic meetings.

Not all was tension and disunity in the life of Thyatira during the nineteenth century, however. In spite of tension over the slavery issue, the period between 1810 and 1855 was a time of spiritual revival for the congregation. Many "seasons of refreshment" (as weeks of revival services were called) were held during those years, and sometime after 1853 the Reverend S. C. Alexander witnessed a hunger for Bible study that was so deep he was astonished.

Beginning a weekly Bible study on Sunday afternoons, he found his original six participants had increased to a roomful, then two separate studies. "The interest became so great," he declared later, "that at every public gathering in the country, such as house raisings, log rollings or quiltings, and even at funerals, the main topic of conversation was those questions

(from his Bible study) and their meaning. The whole community was deeply interested in Bible study.”⁹

The revival climaxed in 1855, the year of Thyatira’s Centennial celebration. Mr. Alexander’s description of what happened on that Sunday and during the following week vividly illustrates the depth of fervor existing in the congregation at that time:

“... the session of Thyatira Church determined to celebrate its centennial ... October 19, 1855, was the day appointed for the great celebration. All the churches that grew out of the old mother church were invited to join in the festivity, viz: Back Creek, Prospect, Third Creek, Mocksville and Salisbury.

“At the early dawn of the great day you could hear the rumbling of wheels, coming from every direction. The day was ideal. The sun shone in all its October glory. The people were gathering in multitudes. Expectation was on tiptoe. No one knew why—but the Lord knew why these thousands were assembling. He had a blessing in store for them.

“The old frame church was very large, with galleries around three sides ... This church was filled to its utmost capacity ... wherever a person could stand. It was with difficulty that I got into the pulpit, so great was the crowd.

“... as I began to read the history of the old ministers and elders, who had taught and ruled in that church for one hundred years ... and awful stillness came over the great congregation ... and when I dismissed the meeting the people sat down again; they did not want to go out.

(at lunch) “After the blessing had been asked, old Uncle Alex Lowrance, an elder and venerable man of God, trembling with age remarked, ‘Brother Alexander, a hundred years from today, where will this great congregation be?’ This was the keynote of their troubled hearts.

“... the Holy Spirit overshadowed that vast assemblage. After dinner there was much solemnity. I told the people I would preach for them if they wished to hear something more about the kingdom. Soon the house was filled. I was not expecting this service; but the Lord was with us in power, and as I preached the whole multitude were in tears ... We preached the next day, and on, for eight days. It was a heavenly feast, ... a surprise

blessing that the Lord gave us. We will never know, in this world, how many souls were born of God during that meeting.”¹⁰

Five years later, in spite of the gathering clouds of war, the Thyatira congregation demonstrated their faith by erecting a new sanctuary to the glory of God, a structure which is still in use. The cost, \$5,000.00 was paid by members' contributions. Dr. Kerr, an Elder and a prominent physician, gave one half of this. According to the Deacon's Record Book of 1856, seventy-six additional pledges were made to the building fund, ranging from a low of \$2.00 to a high of \$270.00. The total subscribed was \$5,627.00.*

The church, set among oak and hickory trees, was of brick construction and Gothic architecture, and was very imposing. Its steeple reached a height of over one hundred feet. (The steeple was lowered sometime early in this century to its present height.)

There were three doors to enter. On the east and west sides were doors which led to a balcony which was on both sides and the front end of the building. This was built for the use of the slaves and any free blacks who came. In the center front were doors into a vestibule, which in turn opened on the sanctuary. On this floor was the pulpit at the opposite end from the entrance, and three sections of pews, one section being on either side under the balcony and one in the center. Windows were of clear glass to permit a view of the oaks and hickorys outside.

After the War Between the States, only one other time did danger of disruption threaten Thyatira, and then only mildly. In January, 1869 Dr. Samuel C. Pharr came as stated supply and was installed as pastor in May of that year. He was about forty-five years old at the time, and members remembered him as an “unusually good preacher and pastor.”¹¹ During his pastorate many were added to the Church. But it was suspected by some in the community that he used alcohol too frequently, and Presbytery ordered the congregation to vote on whether to retain him. The vote was twenty-two to do so, two not to do so. Later the Presbytery of Concord dissolved the pastoral relationship, and suspended Pharr from the Presbyterian ministry. How-

*The full list is found in Appendix F

ever the congregation expressed its continuing confidence in him by saying, "We as a congregation bear testimony to his faithful performance of his duties as pastor in going in and out before this people." So again, what could have created disruption did not do so and this people of God, being rooted and grounded in faith, acted in a manner befitting such people.

For four years after the ministry of Dr. Pharr ended, the congregation was without a pastor. In 1877 the Reverend J. Alston Ramsay was called, and he served the Church for fourteen years. Divisions were past, some reconstruction had taken place, and the congregation could move forward. This it did. Three events marked this pastorate.

The first, but probably not the most important, was the building of the first manse in which pastors could live. The work began in the autumn of 1879 and was completed in the spring of 1880. Mr. Ramsay and his wife were the first occupants. This building would serve as a manse until 1927.

A second ministry of Mr. Ramsay to the Church was leadership in the establishment of a Christian Classical School. The building used was two stories high and was built near the church itself. This school followed the pattern of Zion Parnassus of Dr. McCorkle and of the Thyatira High School that had been established by Stephen Frontes, Jr. immediately following the Civil War. Mr. J. M. Cornell was teacher when the school opened in 1884. He continued until 1889 when Mr. R. E. C. Lawson became the teacher. Both men were interested in helping their students become both learned in the arts and sciences and proficient in Christian living. They received much support from the pastor. When Mr. Ramsey was called to Hickory in 1891 the school lost a strong support, and when a public school started at Mill Bridge at about this time the Christian School ceased to exist.

A third event during this pastorate was the organization of the Women of the Church. The event that brought this about was a robbery at the church which stripped the church of carpets, curtains, water pitcher, the silver baptismal bowl and the communion set. Mrs. Ramsay got the women together and planned a festival to raise funds to replace the lost furnishings. Thus the Ladies Aid Society was begun in a time of need and for a specific task. Funds raised at the festival were insufficient for

the need, so the Ladies Aid Society paid their "little mite" monthly to raise the money.¹²

The Women of the Church continued to work in many ways, especially for missionary support. When the General Assembly approved of a denominational program for women in 1912 the women of Thyatira readily accepted that leadership and continue to this day in Bible study, prayer and service projects to the Glory of God.

It may seem that nothing much happened during the seventy-five years we have described. Such is not the case, for in all these decades the church had continued to be nourished on the Word of God and to respond to its environment, seeking fidelity in its life and work.

When the thrust to "win the world for Christ in this generation" came in the late 19th century, Thyatira was able to give of sons, daughters and wealth to the attempt.

Chapter 5

ZION, HASTE THY MISSION

From the days of its first founding, the congregation of Thyatira has encouraged its youth to hear and to heed God's call. And while much emphasis was placed upon the importance of every member living so as "to enjoy God and to glorify Him forever," a special emphasis was placed upon those who would become ministers and missionaries at home and across the oceans.

The first "son of Thyatira" to do so, both in time and pre-eminence, was Samuel Eusebius McCorkle. Of his ministry we have already written. His labors were extended beyond those described above, for two of his sons were ordained to the Gospel ministry. The Reverend Josiah McCorkle served for only one year as pastor in Fayetteville, then died. Another son, Reverend Abner W. McCorkle, served churches in Tennessee until his death in 1844.

Two families of early Elders in the church also sent their sons into the service of Christ as ministers, according to statements found in the address at the Centennial.¹ In his *History of Thyatira*, Dr. Walter L. Lingle lists three other men who were not members of Thyatira at the time of their licensure.²

So in its first hundred and forty years, Thyatira sent eight persons into the professional leadership of the church. Of these only one was living at the end of the nineteenth century. He was the Reverend William T. Hall, who was an infant when his father became pastor of Thyatira in 1835. Dr. Hall was elected moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., in 1902, the first of two sons of Thyatira who would be so elected.

With the last decade of the nineteenth century a new spirit

was moving in the Thyatira Church which would continue for almost half a century. This spirit would be evident both in the growth of the congregation in its concerns and programs, and in the number of sons and daughters who would hear and heed the call to a vocation as ministers, teachers and medical workers, in the Church at home, and as missionaries overseas.

Already we have mentioned the beginning of the organization of the Women of the Church. Begun as a means of helping meet a particular need of the Church, the women were soon a Missionary Society that met to learn about missionaries and their work and who sacrificed in order to support those who were missionaries overseas.

The Sunday School, long a part of the church's teaching ministry, also became a means of missionary support. The largest Sunday School offerings each month were on the Sundays when the offering was to support missionaries or the Orphans Home at Barium Springs. And as teachers related stories of need at home and abroad, those present not only shared their possessions, but some dedicated their lives to service wherever God might lead.

Missionaries on furlough were invited to speak to the congregation to bring first-hand information about the people being ministered to, as well as to relate some of the fruits of the Gospel.

The pastors of the church over these years were persons who believed in the missionary outreach of the church and encouraged a generous response from the congregation of its money and from the youth of their lives.

It is very probable that yet another influence operated in the congregation over the half century from 1890-1940 which led to so many of the sons and daughters of the church entering "full time Christian service." It was in the last decades of the nineteenth century that John R. Mott and Robert E. Speer launched the Student Volunteer Movement, with "Win the World for Christ in this Generation" as its motto. While it is not possible to assess the effect of this missionary thrust on the church as a whole, nor on Thyatira, it cannot be ignored as one cause of many which led such a large number of youth into full time church vocations.

First among Thyatira's youth to enter the ministry in this period were the three Lingle brothers, William, Walter and Thomas, sons of Wilson A. and Martha Jane Lingle. William H. Lingle went to Illinois as a young man, joined a Presbyterian Church in Hillsboro. From there he attended McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, graduating in 1890. He went as a missionary to China under the Foreign Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. (now the U.P.C.U.S.A.) and labored there until his retirement in 1933. He lived in Pasadena, California from retirement until his death in 1941.

Walter Lee Lingle graduated from Davidson College and Union Seminary in Richmond.* He served pastorates in Dalton, Georgia, Rock Hill, South Carolina, and Atlanta, Georgia until 1911. In that year he was elected to the faculty of Union Theological Seminary. In 1920 he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly, Thyatira's second son to hold that distinction. He remained at the Seminary until 1924, when he became President of the Assembly's Training School (now the Presbyterian School of Christian Education), also in Richmond. Lingle led that school until 1929 when he became President of Davidson College, an office he filled with distinction until he retired in 1941. Dr. Lingle also lectured and wrote extensively. His Sprunt Lectures at Union in 1929 on "The Bible and Social Problems" were both indicative of his own deep concerns and also a prophetic message to the Church. They are the first careful exposition by a Presbyterian churchman in the South to come to grips with the need to "translate into life the social and ethical teachings of our Lord. They (Jesus' teachings) are the only solvent for the world's social problems."³ After retirement Dr. Walter Lingle continued to reside in Davidson, to preach often and write much until his death in 1956.

Thomas W. Lingle was a graduate of Davidson College, of Princeton Theological Seminary and of the University of Leipzig in Germany. His early ministry was in Sao Paulo, Brazil. He

* All further references to "Union Seminary" in this work are to this Presbyterian institution in Virginia.

later served as President of Blackburn College in Illinois, and in 1908 became profesor at Davidson where he remained until he retired in 1937.*

In 1898, James William Goodman, son of Alfred F. and Rebecca Goodman, was ordained after being educated at Davidson College and Union Theological Seminary. He ministered in churches in Orange and Fayetteville Presbyteries until his death in 1924. He is buried in Thyatira cemetery.

John G. Varner, son of Calvin M. and Cornelius Varner, also graduated from Davidson and Union and was ordained in 1900. He served churches in Texas throughout his ministry, dying in 1942. He was stated clerk of the Presbytery of Paris for seventeen years and of Dallas Presbytery for eight years.

The next son of Thyatira to enter the ministry was Floyd Menius, who was ordained in 1915. For several years he worked in Holston Presbytery as an Evangelist. He was pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Lillington for seventeen years, then of the Vanguard Church in Raleigh. This pastorate was followed by service in Fayetteville Presbytery until his retirement in 1950. He died in 1961.

In 1913, after finishing Davidson College, Frank F. Baker was appointed by the Executive Committee of World Missions as an Educational Missionary to Brazil. Frank was the son of Samuel F. and Alice Houck Baker. He returned to the United States in 1917 and enrolled at Union Theological Seminary. After his ordination in 1919 he returned to Brazil, where he continued to serve with distinction until 1961 when he was honorably retired. He served as President of Gammon Institute in Brazil for many years and was a very influential person in the development of the Presbyterian Church in that country. He now lives in Lillington, N.C.

Daniel Templeton Caldwell was born in Huntersville, the son of John S. and Anne Brown Caldwell. He was ordained in 1917

* One of my special memories is of a visit these three men made to our home soon after "Dr. Will" retired. They and my father were all former pupils of my grandfather, Col. William A Houck, who had taught in a one-room log school in the Patterson Community, and I still recall some of the stories shared by these three men and my father on that, for me, memorable afternoon.

after education at Davidson College and Union Theological Seminary. He served churches in Wilmington, N. C. and Petersburg, Va. until called to become Director of the Defense Service Council in 1941. This Council was responsible for screening applicants for chaplains during World War II, and for maintaining the ties of Presbyterian chaplains with the denomination. After that office was discontinued, Caldwell became Director of Christian Education for the Synod of North Carolina. He was elected moderator of the Synod of Virginia in 1941. His death occurred in 1952.

Ernest Gilmore Clary, son of Thomas Lee and Mary Emma Silliman Clary, graduated from Davidson College in 1916. He served in the American Expeditionary Forces in France until 1919, when he enrolled in Union Theological Seminary. He was ordained in 1922 and served churches in North Carolina for several years. In 1932 he became Chaplain at the Berry School in Rome, Ga. where his ministry continued for eight years. He served pastorates after this in Jonesboro, S. C. and in LaGrange, Ga., where he lives in retirement.

While Dr. E. D. Brown was pastor at Thyatira, his son William Payne Brown graduated from Davidson College. He later graduated from Union Theological Seminary and was pastor of the Edenton, N. C. church. Later he served churches in Charleston, W. Va., and Raleigh, N. C.. In 1948 he requested Kanawha Presbytery to be divested of office because of difficulties which had developed in the use of his voice. This request was granted, and since that time he has served in many useful ways as a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Charleston, W. Va.

Clyde R. McCubbins, son of John A. and Margaret Elizabeth Lingle McCubbins, entered Union Theological Seminary in 1924 after serving sixteen years in the United States Army. He graduated from Union in 1927 and pastored churches in Virginia, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas, Florida and South Carolina before his death in 1950.

Two sons of George and Fannie Goodman Houck complete the list of sons of Thyatira who entered the ordained ministry between 1890 and 1940. George Foyle Houck, a graduate of

Davidson College and Union Theological Seminary (1931), served pastorates in Virginia, then in North Carolina: Durham, Candor-Biscoe, Ashpole, West End, Winston Salem and Fayetteville. He is now retired at St. Pauls, N. C.

Samuel Miller Houck graduated from Maryville College in Tennessee and Union Theological Seminary in Virginia (1940). He served pastorates in Narrows, Virginia, North Fork, West Virginia, Statesville and Wilmington, North Carolina, Jacksonville and Miami, Florida. He was elected Moderator of the Synod of Florida in 1969 and Synod Regional Communicator in 1973.

In addition to sons, several daughters of Thyatira also served the church and their Lord in unordained full-time church work in this fifty-year period. One of these was Myrtle McCubbins, a daughter of J. Absolom and Bettie Lingle McCubbins. She went as missionary to China under the Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. (now UPCUSA) in 1907. There she associated with her uncle William Lingle and soon thereafter was married to the Reverend D. E. Crabb. She and her husband remained in China until retirement in Altadena, California.

Another daughter of Thyatira was Ella Graham, who was born in May, 1869. As a child Ella was reared by "strict Presbyterian parents of the old school and was well drilled in the Catechism." She "read the Bible daily" and her prayer for herself was that when teaching, "my own life may be so pure and sweet as to bring no reproach upon the name of Jesus whom I love."⁴ She applied in 1906 to the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions for appointment as a teacher, a profession in which she had been trained and had gained much experience. The Session of Thyatira commended her for appointment, noting that "she has for some years been a consistent member of this church and has always had a zeal for the Kingdom." She was quite modest, noting in a letter to the Executive Committee, "while my life has been very interesting to myself, it is not so to the general public, so it is not necessary to say more."⁵ She got the appointment.

Ella Graham arrived in Korea in November, 1907 and continued there until her death in 1930. She was an undaunted

worker for her Lord and the Korean people, and was much appreciated by her peers. One annual report, typical of many, shows the following use of her time and talents:

“Four weeks of teaching in Normal Institute
 One week of teaching in Kwanju Church
 Ten days in annual Bible Class for Women
 Eighteen days on trip to Chaichu for a class
 One hundred days spent among country churches
 Fourteen country classes, varying in length from five to ten days
 A small amount of local work in and around the city.”

She served an area where there were over three hundred congregations, most of them in rural areas. Travel was by horse-drawn cart until she was given a Ford car in 1923 by a group of friends. She enjoyed that mode of transportation immensely. In 1928, home on furlough, she learned that there was need for more funds lest the Mission Program be cut. She wrote, “The burden of my thoughts and prayers these days is the threatened cut in the budget. Every letter received from Korea expresses distress over the situation.” The letter goes on to declare that except for missionaries we in the United States would never have heard the Gospel, and concluded with both a challenge and a declaration of faith: “When we have shown our earnestness by sending all that we can, let us earnestly pray that God will work upon the hearts of his children that the needed amount will be in the treasury.” She returned to Korea in the fall of 1928 and died there on September 17, 1930.

Elizabeth Corriher united with the Thyatira Church in 1881 as a child. She was educated at the Thyatira Academy and was trained as a nurse at Norfolk Protestant Hospital. After her training she worked in the hospital for a short time, then became the Head Nurse at Boggs Sanitorium, Cassaway, West Virginia.

While in that position she applied to the Executive Committee of Foreign Missions for appointment. She received commendation from her former supervisor, Mrs. Ethel Smith, who wrote Dr. Chester, “You would find her a most excellent nurse, possessing unusual common sense and endurance. The only question I have left is concerning her temperment. She possesses unusual command of herself and I have never seen her lose her temper.

She has not the happiest disposition in the world, though she does not carry an unhappy face or manner. She was teased a good deal about it while in training . . . her classmates declaring Miss Corriher always had the heaviest load to carry, but I, as her superintendant, found her willing to carry more if I wished it, and always carrying it with successful outcome."⁶

In her letter of application Elizabeth told the Committee that she recognized her limitations in her knowledge of the Bible and languages. "I know so little about the foreign work. I am not afraid of the medical work, but I realize the language is very difficult, though, I trust, not insurmountable."⁷ So in spite of some inner uncertainties, she applied and was accepted.

Her pastor, Robert E. Steele, of Sutton, West Virginia wrote the Committee, "She has made herself loved and valued at Cassaway, beyond any who have been before her, and it is with sincere regret that the people will see her leave here. Yet, I am convinced that she is needed abroad more than at home, and since she is willing and ready to go, I trust no small obstacle will block her way. On behalf of our Session, I can endorse her without qualification."⁸

She was not too sure of the results of her application. In March, 1907 she wrote Dr. Chester as follows: "Thank you so much for the note. Am glad testimonials have been satisfactory. Am thankful too, that it will soon be decided. I've been so unsettled lately. Have had several fairly good offers since my application was sent, and really feel I must make some definite plans. Dr. Boggs wants me to promise to stay until June, but I don't see that I can, even if I am not to go to the Far East before July or August. I shall anxiously await the decision of the Executive Committee."⁹

The appointment came through in January, 1908 and Miss Corriher sailed in November for China. She continued in Medical Mission work there until her retirement. Her ministry was marked by a great devotion to her Lord as she trained class after class of nurses in Missionary hospitals in China.

In 1919 Miss Mary Lee Sloan, daughter of William J. and Kate Lingle Sloan went to China where she served until 1927. She went to do secretarial work for the Mission there. She was in charge of all funds for the work of the Station, and taught

English in a girls' school. One of the missionaries, Dr. F. A. Brown, assessed her worth in this excerpt from one of his reports to the Executive Committee of World Missions: "I would not have been able to do as much country work as I did had it not been for the wonderful help of Miss Sloan, and for the ubiquitous Ford. Just think of it! Paying out money? No more! Cashing checks? Not a bit of it. Keeping accounts? Never again! That entertaining task of making out balance sheets? None of it! To say nothing of a skillful and rapid stenographer to handle the inevitable correspondence."¹⁰

After returning to the United States, Miss Sloan lived in Greensboro, North Carolina, until 1941. She served with Daniel T. Caldwell in the Defense Service Council in Richmond during World War II.

Martha C. Houck, daughter of George and Fannie Goodman Houck graduated from the Assembly's Training School (ATS) in 1935 and became Director of Christian Education in Wilson, North Carolina. She later married the Reverend J. Ray Dickens and now lives in Lillington, North Carolina. Martha has given much leadership to the churches where she served with her husband. She taught Bible classes, Sunday School, Leadership Training Courses, worked with Youth and helped with the Music Program when needed. Hers, also, has been a life of service.

Lucille Miller, daughter of E. Scott and Cornelia Miller, graduated from ATS and was in religious and public health work until 1938 when she married Mr. J. W. Johnson of Fayetteville. She has given loyal and creative leadership in the First Presbyterian Church of that city.

Thus in the fifty-year period between 1890 and 1940, thirteen ordained ministers and six unordained persons entered on full-time church vocations from Thyatira Church. This indicates something of the vitality of the church's ministry to its own and the vision it implanted in those who worshipped there of a world which needed to hear the Good News of God in Jesus Christ.

During those same years, many sons and daughters remained in the congregation and gave it leadership, stability and continuity. Still others who were baptized at Thyatira and there professed their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord went to churches in

different communities and there fulfilled a ministry of love, faith and hope which only God's Eternity can weigh and evaluate.

Since 1940 several additional persons related to Thyatira have entered the ministry or are preparing for it. Two sons of the Reverend James E. Guthrie (pastor of Thyatira 1927-1936) have responded to God's call to this service. James, Jr. is now serving as pastor in a congregation near Lexington, Virginia. His brother, Wesley, who was born while his father was at Thyatira, after several years in business life entered Union Seminary in 1975. William Goodnight, Jr., son of William and Bonnie Pope Goodnight, is Thyatira's most recent son to enroll at Union. Robert Houck, son of Mitchell and Florence Ervin Houck, is a Baptist minister in Tennessee.

Thyatira has given of her sons and daughters "to bear the message glorious." She has given of "her wealth to speed them on their way" even as she has lifted up her soul "for them in prayer victorious," knowing through faith that "all thou spendest Jesus will repay."



One View of the Historical Room, showing Pulpit used from 1946. until 1969



View of Historical Room . . . the Painting is of the church as it appeared in 1860 and was painted by Sam Childs.



Historical Room . . .

Top Row . . . Pastors of the Church . . . (left to right)

John A. Gilmer, Walter M. Walsh, J. C. Grier, E. B. Brown, J. E. Guthrie, Henry S. Robinson, James R. Phipps, Carl May, and George S. Calhoun.

Row 2 are Sons of the Church . . . (left to right) William Lingle, Walter L. Lingle, John Goodman, John G. Varner, Thomas W. Lingle, J. Floyd Menius, Daniel T. Caldwell, Frank Fisher Baker.

Row 3 are Sons and Daughters of the Church . . . (left to right) Ernest G. Clary, Clyde R. McCubbins, George F. Houck, Samuel M. Houck, Myrtle McCubbins Crabb, Mary Lee Sloan, Martha Houck Dickens.



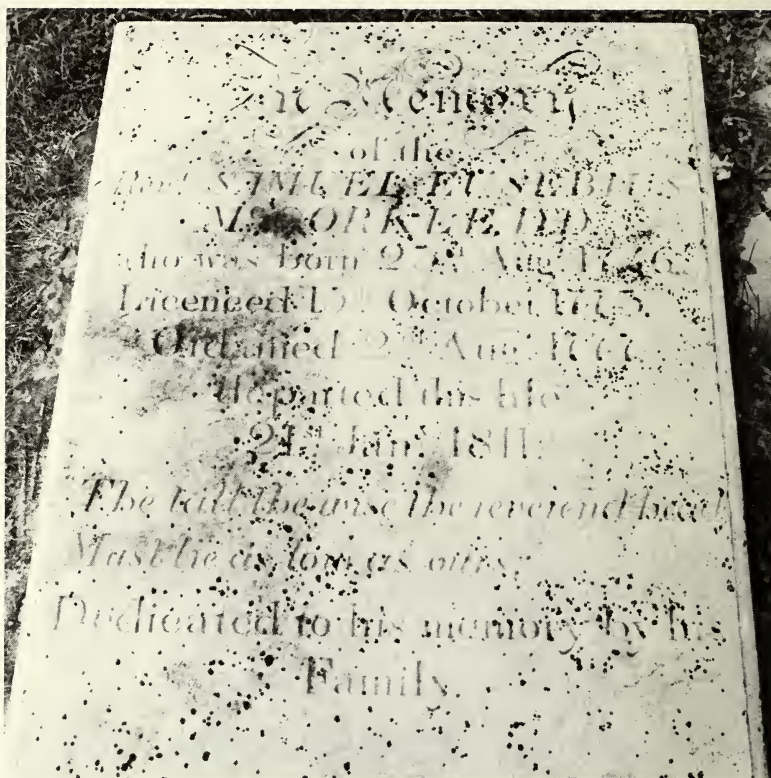
Thyatira Memorial Association

Left to right: Mrs. Merle D. Davis, Mrs. Pauline M. Neel, Mr. C. Locke Neel, Mr. Leonard D. Litaker.



The Cemetery Entrance

The Gate was made by William Cooper about 1825.



Marker for the grave of Dr. Samuel Eusebius McCorkle



View of the oldest part of the cemetery
Marker left of center is of Elizabeth Maxwell Steele, 1731-1791

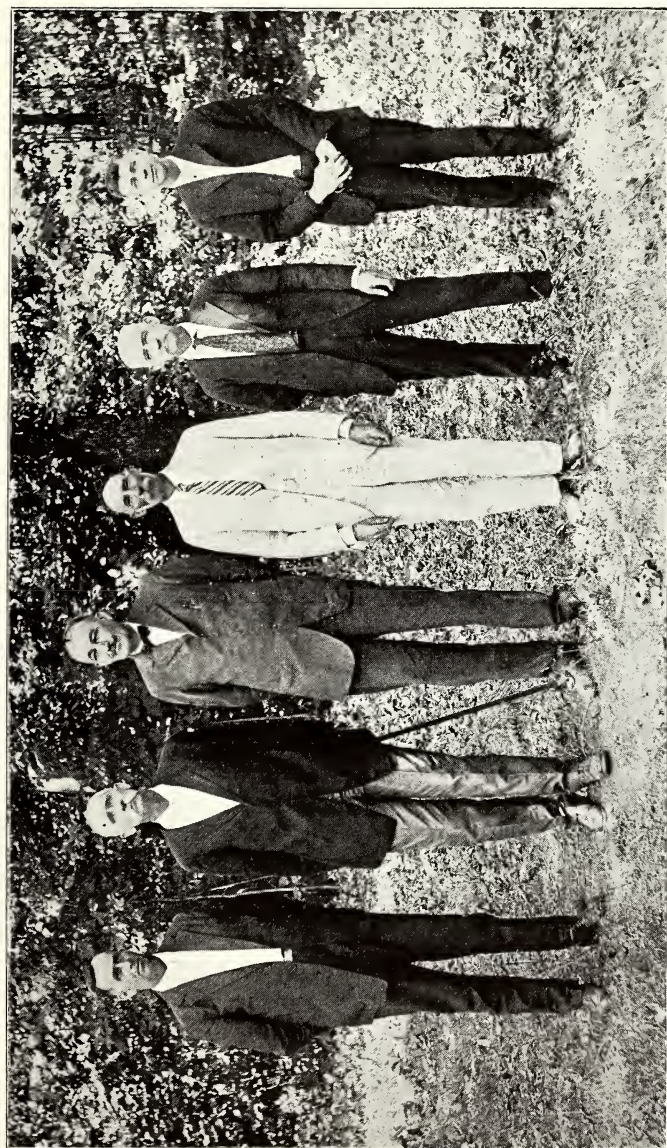


Photo by Alexander, Salisbury.

SESSION

Left to right—J. S. McCorkle, H. W. Silliman, Rev. E. D. Brown, Pastor,
J. F. Turner, J. W. Sloan, Clerk, E. S. Miller.

1925

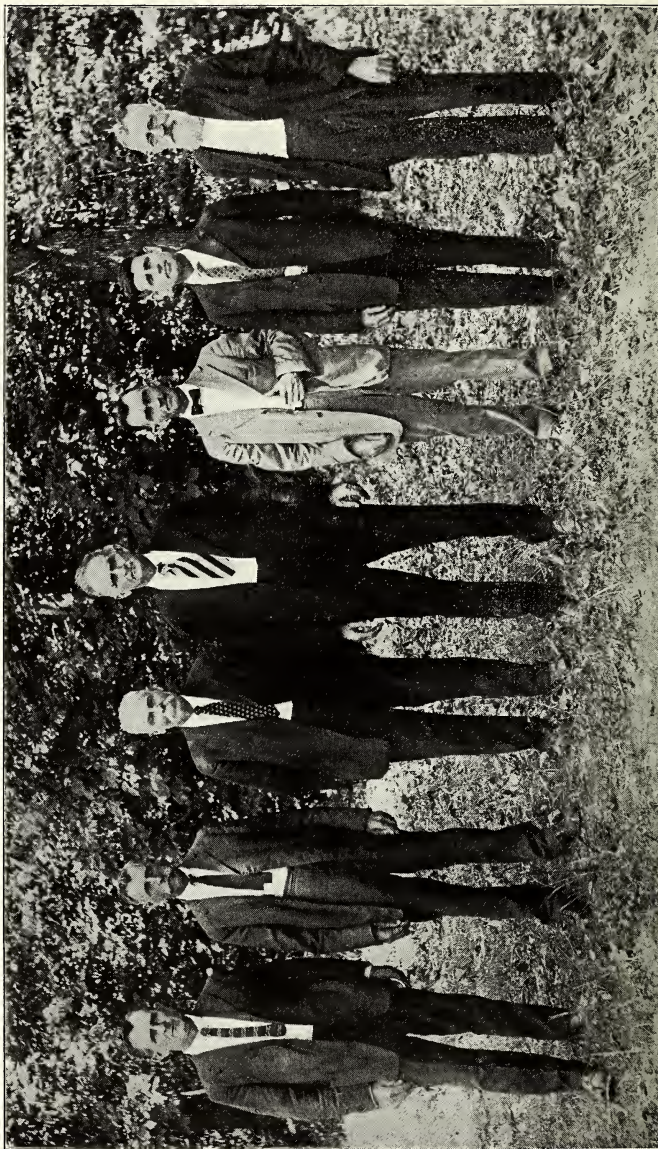


Photo by Alexander, Salisbury.

BOARD OF DEACONS

Left to right—R. L. Albright, G. F. Houck, C. A. Sloop, J. S. Hall, Chairman,
J. C. Carrigan, Treasurer, J. E. Deal, S. F. Baker

Chapter 6

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGE

Thyatira from its early years was a congregation committed to both worship and work. The life of faith was to be lived in the world where decisions were made, where people met with people. What was taught in the Bible, the Catechisms and the Confessions of the Church was to be related to economics, politics, and social relationships. People were to grow up in mind and in soul as well as in body. Before 1800 Dr. McCorkle had enabled his congregation to become, in his judgement, the most knowledgeable people in the country in their understanding of the Bible. He and other ministers made large contributions to aiding the membership to "grow up in all things unto Christ, who is Head"; to become mature in Him. The influence of Godly lay-persons, well trained and thoughtful had been exercised.

Through the years Thyatira gave strong leadership to the community; leadership that could be trusted to act for the common welfare of humanity, as the members of the church fulfilled their Christian commitments.

The internal life of the congregation, its spiritual growth, was always the first concern of pastors and of the Session. From the beginning, study of the Bible was central to that growth. Just when the first organized Sunday School was approved is not known. Certainly it was more than a century ago. One suspects that it was in the decade following the War Between the States, for it was in that period that the Uniform Lesson Series were begun. Before that time there had been an American Sunday School Union which encouraged Sunday Schools and held conventions. In 1872 the Union approved the idea of all Sunday Schools studying the same passage of Scripture on the same day.¹

This idea caught on and the Uniform Lesson Series continues to this day.

In addition to Bible study, the Sunday School provided other Christian learning. In the various classes the Catechisms were memorized. Bible stories were learned and interpreted and Christian conduct encouraged. The roll of teachers faithful to their charge is too long to recount. And some would surely be omitted. Their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life and their influence lives on in the lives of those whom they guided in Heavenly ways. None but God can properly assess their contributions to His Kingdom, and for those who have died in the faith He has said, "Well done good and faithful servant: enter into the joy of your Lord."

My own memories go back to Mrs. E. D. Brown (Miss Fannie) who taught the children under six at both Thyatira and Back Creek. She taught us the Child's Catechism, and many who are now adults will still own the New Testament we received for reciting it to her. Others whose teaching I remember were Miss Isabel Sloop, who taught the children in the first through the third grades for more than forty years; Mrs. R. B. Keistler (Miss Jessie); Mrs. W. D. Graham (Miss Fannie) and Mr. R. B. Keistler who taught the Young Men's Class.

We noted previously the beginnings of the organized work of women in the church. This work continues, and through the years has expanded its service. Always the women were encouraged to meet in Circles for Bible study, prayer and to learn about the work of the church in all the world. They gave to missionary causes and always responded to the "Week of Prayer and Self Denial" for missions, frequently raising their funds by selling an extra dozen eggs or other produce.

The women also became interested in helping send black women to conferences, and provided scholarship funds for them to go. In later years they have assumed responsibilities for other projects designed to assist the total witness of the Church in the community and the world.

With the coming of James Earl Guthrie in 1927 the church began a lively interest in its young people. First of all a youth organization was set up, meeting each Sunday evening for worship, discussion, programs and fellowship. Young people were

encouraged to attend the Presbytery-sponsored conferences, then held at Mitchell College in Statesville. These youth meetings afforded many opportunities to gain experience in public speaking and prayer and offered a deeper sense of belonging. From these conferences many gained new visions and in them made more lasting commitments to Jesus Christ and His Church.

In addition to the organized Youth Work Mr. Guthrie also arranged for annual two- to four-day camping trips for boys in the congregation. These trips gave opportunities for wider knowledge of God's world and for deeper friendships. Space does not permit, nor does the purpose of this writing, the inclusion of memories which cluster around the Youth program which remain so valuable to those of us who participated in it.

It was also during this pastorate of Mr. Guthrie that the Vacation Bible School was begun, a ministry that continues to this present writing.

Following the pastorate of J. E. Guthrie, other needs began to be evident. One of these was for more adequate facilities to be used in the Christian Education program. Through many years adult and some youth classes had met in various parts of the Sanctuary, while children's classes met in the old Christian Classical School built during the ministry of J. Alston Ramsay (1877-1891), to which a shed-like addition had been built about 1922. The pre-school children met on the lower floor; grades one to three in the addition; and grades four to six in the upstairs room. Therefore a new Educational Building was constructed in 1948, during the pastorate of Reverend Mr. James Phipps. This building, attached to the west side of the sanctuary, provided space for more classrooms, a pastor's study and other office space.

In a few years the need for a fellowship hall with kitchen facilities became apparent, and in 1962, during the pastorate of the Reverend Mr. Carl May, such a building was erected just north of the sanctuary. These building have enabled the congregation to expand its outreach to serving many groups of people, as well as meeting its own needs.

From the time of its organization Thyatira has provided a cemetery where those who "rest in the Lord" may be interred. It lies just north of the church. In the beginning, a rock wall was

built around it. Iron gates were set at the entrance about 1825, made by an ironmaker named William Cooper. Later these were removed and taken to Davidson College, where they remained for many years. One of them was returned to the church and again set at the entrance in 1932.*

The cemetery is filled with history, much of it to be found only there. During the early 1930's work was begun to reclaim the oldest part from honeysuckle and weeds. Some work was done on the old wall which had fallen into a state of sad disrepair. In 1940 a WPA project set up the stones and listed names and dates on all of them. These stones show that the earliest marked grave dates from 1755, fourteen markers are for persons who died prior to 1770. Ninety-one mark burials prior to 1800. The names on some of those stones suggest the size of families who lived in the community. There are nine markers for the Brandon family, seven each for Graham and McCorkle families, five for Barr and Locke families, three for Armstrong, Hart and Knox families.

Inscriptions are often creative as well as descriptive: Captain William Armstrong "Died in ye bed of Honour in Defence of his country." John Biggs was "Born in the country of Antrim in the Kingdom of Ireland." Robert Gillespie "lived twenty-nine days after being scalped at Fort Dobbs." Robert Ramsay, "A Revolutionist," . . . "was a consistent member of the Presbyterian Church." The marker for John and Jean Knox notes they were natives of Scotland and had seven sons, whose names are listed. It also notes that one of them, James Knox, was the "grandfather of James Knox Polk, President of the United States." (Plainly the marker was placed years after John and Jean died in 1758 and 1772, respectively.)

There are also many unmarked graves from these early decades. Stones were scattered and many were set up with no identification of the person. Two such stones provide a mystery. There is no inscription on them, but one has a carved skull, with

* After this manuscript was completed, I heard that Walter Ervin, a member of Thyatira, had made a gate to match the one made by William Cooper. This gate is to be set on the right side of the cemetery entrance in the summer of 1976.

a sword drawn through the mouth, while the other has a very mutilated drawing of eyes, nose and mouth. It lends romance to say that these are markers of pirates. Imagination can do what it will with them. In 1966 a booklet was published giving all the data on the stones from 1755 until that date.²

The cemetery is now one of the continuing projects of the Thyatira Memorial Association, formed in 1958. A legacy of \$10,000 from the will of D. H. Harrison provided funds for this association to begin its work. Since that time the Association has been concerned with the upkeep of the cemetery, the preservation of historical records and the discovery of extant materials. It has also received financial support from hundreds of people who have given gifts as memorials or because they were interested in the work being done. Through the years C. Locke Neel, Pauline McCorkle Neel, Merle Davis Graham and Leonard Litaker have given leadership as officers of the Association.

The Thyatira Historical Room displays portraits of many former pastors and also portraits of the "Sons and Daughters" of the church whose names are listed in chapter five of this narrative. In addition, the Historical Room contains a copy of the original deed of the property and lists of those who served their country in its wars since 1775. Old communion tokens are there, as is the pulpit which was in the church from 1861 until the renovation of the pulpit furniture in 1945. Old Bibles and a variety of memorabilia are preserved as a reminder of the rich past of this congregation.³

In 1855 the congregation observed its centennial. The address on that occasion by the pastor, Reverend S. C. Alexander (see Chapter Four) is the opening chapter of the first formal history of Thyatira Church, written by Dr. Thomas W. Lingle and published in 1925. A second history of the congregation was written by his brother Walter in 1948. In 1954 the bicentennial was observed. In January, on the Sunday nearest the date on the original deed for the property, the service featured brief accounts of appreciation and thanksgiving from several former members of the congregation. In August there were services of worship each evening for one week, with the preaching being done by "Sons of the Church" or former pastors. The climax of the week was a "Homecoming Celebration" on the second Sunday of

August. This joyful occasion thus begun, Homecoming continues to be held annually on the second Sunday of August, when many returned for renewal of faith, friendships and family ties.

The centennial was held in the third building erected by the congregation, the bicentennial in the fourth—which is still being used. This building has been renovated possibly several times, once being in 1928 when a new ceiling was put in and painting done. The pulpit furniture was renovated and new pews were put in the sanctuary in 1965, as a part of the latest reworking of the interior.

Music has added greatly to the worship of the congregation through the years. The first instrument was an organ, then a piano. In 1952 a set of hanging chimes was given by Mrs. Lula Beeker in memory of her husband, C. T. Beeker, and her son, Alvin Gray Beeker. An Allen electric organ was installed in 1955. The choir was never large, but since 1955 has met for practice and has added greatly to the worship of the congregation.

In recent years a troop of Boy Scouts has been sponsored by the Church. A scout hut stands north and west of the fellowship hall.

For over two hundred and twenty-five years God has given life to this congregation. Thousands of persons have been affected by the Gospel's "joyful sound" as it was proclaimed at Thyatira, and have lived better lives for it. God's blessings have been openly acknowledged and gratefully used in service. Faithfully, persons who were nourished in belief through this congregation have lived and served. Many have died, not having received the fulness of the promise. We who remain, "surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses" are called to "run with patience the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith. . . ." The future is bright with the promise of the "Son of God who has eyes like a burning flame and feet like burnished bronze" which is "to those who prove victorious and keep working for me until the end, I will give the authority over the pagans which I myself have been given by my Father, to rule them with an iron scepter and shatter them like earthenware. And I will give him the Morning Star."⁴

Thyatira hears and will keep Faith!

FOOTNOTES

Chapter I

1. *The Rowan Story*, Brawley, James S.
This book is the History of Rowan County published at the time of the bicentennial celebration in 1953.
2. *Carolina Cradle*, Ramsay, Robert W., p. 57
Prior to 1752 there were at least fourteen families of German descent. Between 1752-1762 at least forty-three additional families immigrated to the area from Germany.
And also, Article of Charles F. Daniel, in *The Salisbury Evening Post*, Bicentennial Edition.
3. *Carolina Cradle*, Ramsay, Robert W., p. 200-201
4. Ibid p. 37ff
5. Ibid p. 200
6. *The Prophet of Zion Parnassus*, Hurley, James F. and Eagan, Julia G. p. 39

Chapter II

1. Rowan County was set off from Anson County on the following day, January 19, 1753.
2. The original deed is in the Library of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. A copy is in the Historical Room at Thyatira.
3. *History of Thyatira*, Lingle, Walter L., p. 10
4. *History of Rowan County*, Rumble, Jethro
5. Lingle, W. L., *op.cit* 9
6. *In Freedom's Cause*, Samuel Young, Fleming, John K., p. 40-41
7. See Appendix B for the most complete list available.

Chapter III

1. *Samuel Eusebius McCorkle*, *North Carolina Educator*, Egner, William Randolph p. 44

2. Ibid p. 48
3. Ibid p. 48
4. Ibid p. 54
5. *Sketches of North Carolina*, Foote, William Henry, (3rd ed) p. 351
6. Egner, *op.cit* p. 58
7. Ibid p. 59
8. Ibid p. 60
9. *The Prophet of Zion Parnassus*, Hurley, James F. and Eagan, Julia G., 1934, p. 61.
10. *The Works of the Rev. John Witherspoon*, John Rogers, ed., Vol. IV, p. 17
11. Ibid p. 20
12. Ibid p. 16
13. Ibid p. 16
14. Hurley, James F. and Julia G., *op.cit*. The title of this book is well deserved.
15. These are on microfilm in Dr. McCorkle's handwriting.
16. *The Carolina Back Country on the Eve of the Revolutionary War*, Woodmason, Charles. The quotation is from a letter dated March 26, 1771.
17. *History of Thyatira Church, Rowan County, North Carolina, 1753-1925*, Lingle, Thomas W., p. 11
18. Ibid p. 11
19. Lingle, Walter L. *op.cit* p. 15
20. Ibid p. 13

Chapter IV

1. *Book of Church Order* p. 75, 1965 Ed.
2. *The History of Religion in America*, Sweet, p. 86
3. Microfilm of Minutes of the Session in the Historical Foundation, Montreat, N. C.
4. Ibid
5. Ibid
6. Ibid
7. Lingle, Walter L., *op.cit* p. 29
8. Ibid See Appendix C

9. *Miracles and Events*, S. C. Alexander, Commercial Printing Co., Pinebluff; Ark., Copy in Historical Foundation, Montreat, N. C. WPQA1378
10. Ibid
11. Lingle, Walter L. op.cit p. 39
12. Ibid p. 60

Chapter V

1. See Lingle, T. W. op.cit, chap. I
2. Lingle, W. L. op.cit p. 66
3. *The Bible and Social Problems*, Lingle, Walter L., p. 8
4. "Missionary Correspondence" now on microfilm in the Presbyterian Center, Atlanta, Ga.
5. Ibid
6. Ibid
7. Ibid
8. Files of the Board of World Missions, now in Atlanta, Ga.
9. Ibid
10. "Missionary Correspondence," Atlanta, Ga.

Chapter VI

1. *The Story of Religion in America*, Sweet, William Warren, p. 545
2. A mimeographed listing of "Inscriptions on Stones in the Cemetery" was made available in 1966 by the Thyatira Memorial Association. Copies may be available.
3. Maintenance of this room is one of the projects of the Memorial Association.
4. Revelation 2:18, 26-28 (Jerusalem Bible)

APPENDIX A

Pastors of Thyatira

Most of the ministers who served the Thyatira congregation in its earliest years are not identifiable. In 1753 "two missionaries were sent by direction of the Synod to visit Virginia and North Carolina. Mr. McMordie and Mr. Donaldson."

Those who served specifically are:

Hugh McAden 1755

Mr. Miller and Mr. Craig 1757 (Each was ordered to spend one Sabbath at Thyatira)

Elihu Spencer and Alexander McWhorter (Sent by the Synod in 1764 to "mark out the proper places for churches and also their boundaries.")

Mr. Harris 1771

Samuel Eusebius McCorkle 1777-1811

John Brown 1807-1809 (Stated Supply)

John Carrigan 1814-1822

James Stafford 1822-1830

Elijah Morrison Stated Supply

Thomas Espy 1831-1833

Patrick J. Sparrow One year

James D. Hall 1835-1846

Stephen Frontis 1846-1851

James M. H. Adams Stated Supply

Robert Agnew 1852-1853

S. C. Alexander 1854-1859

Barnabas Scott Krider 1859-1865

George M. Gibbs 1867 (Called but never installed as pastor)

Samuel Caldwell Pharr 1869-1873

J. Alston Ramsay	1877-1891*
John A. Gilmer	1900-1904
Walter M. Walsh	1906-1911
J. C. Grier	1912-1916
Edward Douglas Brown	1916-1927
James Earl Guthrie	1927-1937
Henry S. Robinson	1938-1942
James R. Phipps	1943-1955**
Carl May	1956-1965
George S. Calhoun	1966-

* From 1877 until 1946 Thyatira and Back Creek shared the services of pastors listed.

** Became full time pastor at Thyatira in 1946.

APPENDIX B

Ruling Elders of Thyatira

1753-1948

John Barr	Alexander Lowrance (55 years an Elder)
Alexander McCorkle	Thomas Todd
William Cathey	James Brandon Gibson
John McNeely	John Knox Graham
James Graham	John P. Silliman
John Dobbin	John R. Lowrance
Samuel Barkley	Newberry F. Hall
William Bowman	Henry Sechler
Thomas King	Joseph Henderson
Thomas Gillespie	Alfred F. Goodman
Abraham Lowrance	J. Samuel McCubbins
William Bell	Hugh W. Silliman
Thomas Craven	Columbus C. Miller
Joseph Kerr	James W. Sloan
James Stewart	James Franklin Carrigan
James McCulloch	E. Scott Miller
William Cowan	John F. Goodman
John Reed	Joseph F. Turner
Richard Gillespie	J. Samuel McCorkle
William Gibson	T. S. Harrison
Francis Gibson	J. Chalmers Carrigan
William Chambers	B. Scott Krider
Jamus Gillespie	C. W. Hall
William Miller	James W. Sloan
Henry Winder	C. L. Neel, Jr.
James Silliman	W. Herron Kistler
James Caruthers	J. Harold Graham

Elders ordained and installed since 1948

Baker, James S.	April 16, 1950
Goodnight, J. Lee	" " "
Albright, Cecil M.	" " "
Caldwell, John B., Sr.	" " "
Graham, Emory K., Sr.	December 29, 1957
Hall, Carl W., Jr.	" " "
Graham, Curtis	December 28, 1958
Litaker, O. Worth	" " "
Shoaf, Kenneth C.	" " "
Sloan, Theodore S.	" " "
Bailey, Warren	January 3, 1959
Smith, Ralph	January 1, 1961
Wilson, J. Carl	January 1, 1962
Albright, James W.	January 5, 1964
Childs, J. Samuel	January 3, 1965
Hall, William S.	December 26, 1965
Litaker, Leonard D.	January 7, 1968
Sides, W. A.	January 7, 1968
Goodnight, Everett M.	May 18, 1969
Steelet, Robert Hall	December 27, 1970
Wilson, Charles L.	December 31, 1972
Parker, John J.	December 30, 1973
Harrison, Benjamin I.	" " "

Deceased Elders since 1948

McCorkle, J. Samuel	October 16, 1967
Shoaf, O. Carl	December 13, 1960
Krider, B. S.	September 28, 1954
Hall, Carl W.	May 6, 1954
Graham, Harold	February 24, 1969
Baker, James S.	September 6, 1974
Goodnight, J. Lee	March 28, 1969
Caldwell, John B., Sr.	May 25, 1965
Shoaf, Kenneth C.	December 5, 1974
Wilson, J. Carl	January 7, 1974

APPENDIX C

Deacons of Thyatira

Deacons elected prior to 1948

Joseph Miller	1855-1877
Joseph Henderson	-1864
J. F. Carrigan	1871-1892
John C. Gillespie	1876-
John L. Graham	1876-1891
Wilson H. Lingle	1877-1886
Rufus Albright	1877-1887
Columbus A. Sloop	1882-1929
Samuel F. Baker	1886-1938
J. W. Goodman	1888-1898
J. Chalmers Carrigan	1892-1936
Henry N. Goodnight	1892-1907
Joseph S. Hall	1902-1935
John L. Patterson	-1916
Robert L. Albright	1917-1944
Robert L. Steele	1929-1948
George F. Houck	1902-1949
Jacob E. Deal	1908-1963
John W. Wilson	1929-1963
E. K. Graham	1936-
S. D. Corriher	1936-
T. O. Harrison	1936-
James S. Baker	1940-1941
Kenneth Shoaf	1940-
F. Grady Hall	1947-1951
G. Lee Goodnight	1947-
J. B. Caldwell, Jr.	1947-

Deacons ordained and installed since 1948

Goodnight, Everette M.	April 16, 1950
Smith, Ralph	" " "
Upright, Cecil	" " "
Wilson, J. Carl	" " "
Litaker, O. Worth	" " "
Caldwell, John Robert	" " "
Beeker, James T.	" " "
Shoaf, O. C., Jr.	" " "
Albright, James W.	December 29, 1957
Goodnight, W. C.	" " "
Graham, E. K., Jr.	December 28, 1958
Turner, John P.	" " "
Walton, Henry A.	" " "
Wilson, Charles L.	" " "
Hall, Turner	January 3, 1959
Weast, Robert	" " "
Harrison, Benjamin I.	" " "
Childs, Samuel	January 1, 1961
Shaver, Dewey	" " "
Graham, Stanley	" " "
Litaker, Harold	" " "
Litaker Leonard	January 1, 1962
Kerr, Perry	" " "
Silliman, Bennett	December 30, 1962
Albright, Frank	January 3, 1965
Goodman, Howard	" " "
Parker, John J.	December 26, 1965
Steele, Robert Hall	" " "
Swanson, Donald	December 26, 1963
Albright, Sidney	January 1, 1967
Goodnight, Ferdinand	January 7, 1968
White, Donald R.	" " "
Davis, Clayton	December 28, 1969
Luther, Ted W.	" " "
Barber, John Wilson	May 18, 1969
Goodnight, Ronald B.	January 2, 1972

Deacons ordained and installed since 1948 (cont'd)

Grubbs, Robert H.	December 30, 1973
Turner, Thomas F.	" " "
Graham, Larry M.	" " "
White, Robert E.	" " "
Hall, Thomas A.	December 22, 1974
Deal, Frank O.	December 14, 1975
Hall, T. Correll, Jr.	" " "

Deceased Deacons since 1948

Houck, George F.	June 25, 1949
Deal, Jacob E.	November 7, 1963
Wilson, John W.	October 13, 1963
Corriher, Samuel D.	May 7, 1967
Harrison, J. Owen	July 21, 1965
Hall, F. Grady	May 8, 1951
Goodnight, Ferdinand	February 27, 1975

APPENDIX D
Baptisms of Infants - White 1854-1860

1.	Sarah Jane Catherine Sloop	
2.	James R. Silliman	
3.	Alice Jerona Lingle	
4.	Alice Drucilla Houck	
5.	Laura Hudson	
6.	Laura Eugenia Sloan	
7.	Rebecca Josephine Sloan	
8.	Francis Ida Jane Graham	
9.	Wm. Lowrie Gillespie	
10.	Laura Crawford Sloop	
11.	Mary Jesephine McNeely	
12.	Martha Jane Miller	
13.	Elizabeth Corneline Lowrie Hall	
14.	Britania M. Sloan	
15.	James N. Baker	
16.	Albert Finley Houck	
17.	John Locke Graham	
18.	Joseph Dobbin Graham	May 1, 1857
19.	James Henry Graham	
# 20.	Sarah Jane Graham	
21.	Mary De Luella Graham	Died
22.	Joseph Shepherd Hall	June 21, 1857
23.	Samuel Caldwell Lowrance	November 15, 1857
24.	Uletha Jane Isabella Gillespie	November 15, 1857
25.	John Carson David Frederick Menas	December 20, 1857
26.	Julie Josaphin Miller	April 30, 1858
27.	Amanda Naresa Sloop	May 1, 1858
# 28.	Elizabeth Jane Sillaman	May 1, 1858
29.	Mary Vanna Miller	May 1, 1858
30.	Mary Jane Elizabeth Albright	May 1, 1858
31.	William M. Sloop	May 1, 1858
32.	Lillie Zelpha Graham	
33.	Mary Ann Jerona Houck	May 29, 1859

Baptisms of Infants - White 1854-1860 (cont'd)

34. Joseph Young Graham	June 3, 1859
35. Margaret Catharine Gillespie	June 3, 1859
36. Margaret Ann Watson	July 3, 1859
37. James Adolphus Cowan	July 3, 1859
#38. Jeremiah Edward Sloop	July 3, 1859
39. John Levi Baker	July 17, 1859
40. Thos. Young and Sally Elizabeth Lingle - Son and Daughter of John Lingle	September 30, 1859
41. Richard Harry Hall, Son of F. N. M. E. Hall	September 30, 1859
42. Hugh Wilson Son of J. P. M. A. Sillaman	September 30, 1859
43. Wm. McCorkle, Son of Thos B & Sarah Slown	April 6, 1860
44. Linney Jane, Daughter of J. F. & C. A. Carrigan	April 6, 1860
#45. Margaret E., Daughter of Wilson & J. A. Lingle	April 6, 1860
#46. John Holms, Son of Peter Albright	1860
47. Mary Wood Henderson, Daughter of J. & M. Henderson	Dead
#48. James Matthew Alexander Meneas, Son of J. M. & M. E. Meneas	
#49. David C. Bradshaw, Son of F. & J. Bradshaw	November 18
# - Communing Member	

APPENDIX E

Soldiers, members of Thyatira

I. REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Captain James Kerr
Hezekiah Cowan
Robert Locke Cowan
Captain John Kerr
Thomas Cowan
Joseph Kerr
Dr. Samuel Kerr
John H. King
Thomas King
Joseph Knox
Absolum Knox
John Knox
William Knox
Samuel Knox
James Knox
Benjamin Knox
George Clodfelter
Dr. Samuel E. McCorkle (Patriot)
Colonel Francis Locke
James Brandon
Alexander Lowrance
John Barr
William Barr
Thomas Gillespie
Matthew Locke, Esq.
Abraham Lowrance
Frederick Menius
Thomas Todd
Major James Brandon
William Steele
Captain William Armstrong
William Bowman
Captain William Knox

Major John Locke
John Smith
Robert Ramsey
Robert Gillespie
John Brandon

II. WAR OF 1812

Colonel Alexander Work Brandon

III. WAR BETWEEN THE STATES

Conrad Lingle
John Sechler
Dr. F. N. Lucky
Captain W. A. Houck
John Gillespie
David Clodfelter
William Clodfelter
Stokes Cowan
Joshua Miller
John Turner
J. B. Parker
Alpheus Dancy
J. G. Varner
J. Rowan Davis
John Carrigan
Alfred Goodman
Henry Sechler
Samuel Beeker
Jesse Miller
Caleb Lipe
John L. Sloan
Junius J. Sloan
John T. Clodfelter
Peter Albright
Jesse Stancil
Richard T. Gillespie
J. L. Shulenburger
Matthew Menius
William Albright
William Cowan

John P. Silliman
George Robinson
James Hughes
John K. Graham
Wilson Lingle
W. A. McCorkle

IV. WORLD WAR I

Clyde Gillespie
James W. Turner
Thomas F. Safrit
Emory Graham
Robert Cress
John B. Caldwell
Clyde McCubbins
Clifford McCorkle
Albert Safrit
Ernest Clary
E. Flynn Menius

V. WORLD WAR II

John Thomas Erwin
Joel P. Goodnight
Paul S. Corriher
James S. Baker
James Locke McNeely
Frank Grady Hall, Jr.
Ralph S. Corriher
James D. Erwin
William Kenneth Wilson
Robert James Henderson
William K. Carrigan
Richard K. Carrigan
Roscoe Davis
Wm. S. Hall
Edward Ralph McCorkle
Douglas Payne Houck - lost January 25, 1945
James P. Goodnight
John Wilson Erwin
Walter Ware Erwin

Samuel Erwin
Alvin Gray Beeker
Alvin Gray Beeker - lost August 9, 1945
Roger A. Harrison
Joseph Marlin Caldwell
Turner Correll Hall
James E. Gillespie
William A. Sloan
John J. Parker
James Carl Wilson
John Robert Caldwell
Bruce Morrison - lost October 21, 1944
Gilbert Eugene McNeely
Parks Harrison
Mitchell Houck
Clyde Brawley
John Wilson Barber
Richard C. Gillespie
Joseph A. Barber
Benjamin I. Harrison
Hall Steele
Lawrence Goodnight
Edgar Baker
Linn Goodnight
Mildred Shoaf
Sarah Baker
Harvey T. Alexander
Robert L. Caldwell
Daniel T. Caldwell, D.D. Director of Defence Service
Council Southern Presbyterian Church
Samuel Hodge Baker
James W. Harrison
Theodore S. Hall
Cecil Brown Wilson
James T. Beeker
Eugene M. Goodnight
Otha Carl Shoaf, Jr.
Joseph C. Morrison
Wilson M. Erwin, Jr.

Carl Wells Hall, Jr.
Curtis Clarkson Graham
Marvin A. Goodnight
William C. Goodnight
Frank H. Baker
Joseph H. Harrison
Harold Beeker
William T. Caldwell
W. A. Sides
Howard Goodman

VI. KOREAN WAR

Thomas Baker
Howard Goodman
George S. Calhoun
Dewey Shaver
Harvey T. Alexander
Other members who were in service during that time:
Jimmy R. Wilson
Emory K. Graham
Thomas F. Turner
Robert D. Weast
Grady F. Hall
Richard C. Hall
Johnny F. Harrison
William W. White
Joseph W. Phipps
Harry Hall
Jack R. Hooks
Thomas Barber
Johnny Graham
Johnny A. Morrison
Frank Albright
Charles Wilson

VII. VIET NAM WAR

Curtis C. Graham, Jr.
Jimmie Higgins
Bobby Parker
Darrell Goodnight

W. A. Graham
Joseph E. Shoaf
Robert E. White
Phillip Goodnight
John M. Cress, Jr.
Roger Higgins
Other boys who have been in service from 1965-1975
Danny Caldwell
Mickey E. Houck
Mitchell F. Houck, Jr.
Terry Morrison
Richard Null
Ronald Goodnight
James Baker, Jr.
Clayton D. Davis
Larry Graham
Robert C. Houck
Mickey Walton
John Sloan
Tommy Smith
Larry Walters
Norman Albright
William H. Kistler, Jr.
John Thomas Erwin
Joe Hall Goodnight
Dwight Graham
C. A. Porter
Johnny Caldwell

VIII. MEMBERS IN SERVICE AT THE PRESENT TIME:

Mitchell F. Houck, Jr.
James Baker, Jr.
C. Clarkson Graham, Jr.

APPENDIX F

Copied from the Deacon's Record Book 1856

For the purpose of the building a new church for public worship at Thyatira. We agree to pay the sum annexed to our names :

Dr. Samuel Kerr	\$2500
Henry Sechler	125.00
Thom. Todd	200.00
N. F. Hall	270.00
J. B. Gibson	235.00
Alexander Lowrance	10.00
J. K. Graham	140.00
J. P. Silliman	25.00
J. B. McNeely	135.00
Joshua Miller	75.00
James F. Carrigan	25.00
A. A. Cowan	30.00
W. F. Watson	25.00
Rev. B. S. Krider	25.00
Rev. A. Baker	10.00
R. H. Cowan	245.00
Robert Harris	115.00
F. H. Luckey	50.00
T. B. Sloan	100.00
John McConnaughey	150.00
John Lingle	20.00
Peter Albright	5.00
Benjamin Hyde	100.00
M. C. D. Cowan	20.00
C. H. McKenzie	25.00
John C. Gillespie	100.00
Joseph Jenkins	200.00
John L. Sloan	50.00
S. A. Sloan	30.00
W. A. Houck	25.00
Samuel McLaughlin	25.00
H. Baker	18.00
John S. Graham	15.00
Wm. Miller	15.00
John R. Lowrance	10.00
Michael Albright	25.00

James Neel	80.00
John R. Neel	5.00
James B. Parker	5.00
H. L. Dancey	5.00
Frederick Menius	12.50
James M. Menius	12.50
Wm. L. Smith	5.00
John F. Sechler	10.00
Elijah Rice	5.00
Thomas Hyde	5.00
M. A. Locke	10.00
C. A. Miller	5.00
H. W. McNeely	5.00
A. S. Rose	5.00
J. H. Watts	5.00
Elium Neel	5.00
Dr. J. J. Summerell	25.00
D. S. Cowan	20.00
Mary Cowan	25.00
James S. Graham	10.00
Wm. M. Graham	3.00
Edward Sloop	5.00
Brittana Sloan	20.00
Mary G. Kincaid	10.00
Conrad Lingle	20.00
James Basinger	5.00
W. A. Lingle	5.00
Sarah Houston	2.00
George McConnaughey	10.00
James Horah	5.00
J. J. Bruner	20.00
C. R. Miller	15.00
Moses Lingle	5.00
J. C. McConnaughey	10.00
Henry Horah	5.00
E. H. Sprague	10.00
Elizabeth Lowery	20.00
Caroline Houck	2.00
Jacob Sloop	2.00
T. Watson	10.00
W. Reader	10.00

Amount pledged to the building of the new church was \$5627.00

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Salisbury Evening Post, Bicentennial Edition, April 29, 1975

ARCHIVES

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2. Perkins Library, Duke University, Durham, N. C.
3. Presbyterian Historical Foundation, Montreat, N. C.
4. Missionary Correspondence Files of the General Executive Board, PCUS, Atlanta, Ga.
5. Rowan County Public Library, Salisbury, N. C.

Errata

Page 51—Correct dates are 1861 to 1946.

Page 53—Pictured at left is Mrs. Merle Davis Graham



Historical Room . . .

Top Row . . . Pastors of the Church . . . (left to right)

John A. Gilmer, Walter M. Walsh, J. C. Grier, E. B. Brown, J. E. Guthrie, Henry S. Robinson, James R. Phipps, Carl May, and George S. Calhoun.

Row 2 are Sons of the Church . . . (left to right) William Lingle, Walter L. Lingle, John Goodman, John G. Varner, Thomas W. Lingle, J. Floyd Menius, Daniel T. Caldwell, Frank Fisher Baker.

Row 3 are Sons and Daughters of the Church . . . (left to right) Ernest G. Clary, Clyde R. McCubbins, George F. Houck, Samuel M. Houck, Myrtle McCubbins Crabb, Mary Lee Sloan, Martha Houck Dickens.



Rev. George Calhoun—Pastor 1966—

[illegible]

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